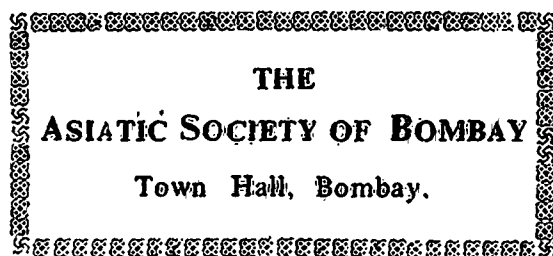




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IRELAND IN PAST TIMES;
AN HISTORICAL RETROSPECT,
ECCLESIASTICAL AND CIVIL;

WITH
ILLUSTRATIVE NOTES.

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Præterita compellunt nos futurorum rationem habere.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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LONDON:

JOHN HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY;

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PREFACE.

THE writer of the following pages can, with perfect integrity, disclaim every interested motive or party feeling in the choice of her subject: the only aim has been, to give a plain and simple narrative of the progress of the Christian religion in Ireland, from the idea that it is always pleasing to the mind to return to times gone by; to trace to their sources the springs from whence flow the virtues and the errors of men, and to examine the silent operation of those powerful agents in human affairs—religious zeal and moral law.

It is confessed, that reflecting how far the subject might lead her, much intimidation ensued; yet, having frequently experienced the indulgent candour of the public, she has encouraged herself to proceed in her self-imposed task, from a conviction that the subject is worthy of attention, as it never can be an uninteresting or useless contemplation, to mark the vicissitudes and conflicts of past ages, whether of a warlike, civil, or ecclesiastical nature, forming, as they have done,

and made subservient to the design of giving a faithful epitome of the rise and progress of the Hibernian church.

Unaided by literary connection, and removed from that advantageous collision of thought afforded by intelligent society, the writer is perfectly conscious, that both in expression and arrangement, her composition is open to the utmost severity of criticism ; yet she trusts, that simplicity and fidelity may together form the softening veil, through which the keen eye of experienced judgment will view the numerous defects of her unpretending work.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Ireland first peopled by Celtic tribes from Gaul—Their government, Religion, the mysteries attending it—The Druids—their office and power, their superstitions—their distinguished habits—Chiefs of the tribes—The Vergobretus—The People question the power of the Druids—Their influence declines—The Druids endeavour to assert their privilege—The effort unsuccessful—The limitation of their power a prelude to its extinction—The Bards—their office and influence—Cormac O'Conn, his splendour, his dignity and character—State of society, the progression of improvement—Counteracting causes—Introduction of Christianity—It is mingled with Pagan superstition, the mischiefs thence accruing---The corruption of the ministers of religion---Unguarded conduct of the converts---the consequences---The introduction of Christianity is a positive national blessing.

As these volumes will principally treat of the Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, that of a secular nature will be no further adverted to, than as it necessarily tends to the illustration of the predominant subject. Hence the vague and uncertain records of Irish history before the introduction of the Christian faith will not be explored, nor any endeavour made to dispel the obscurity in which they are enveloped antecedent to that event. It will suffice to say, that in an early period of the second century of the Christian era, Ireland is stated to have been peopled by Celtic adventurers from ancient Gaul, who having emigrated from thence to Britain, prosecuted their way even to the fertile shores of Ireland, and were generally

distinguished there and elsewhere by the apposite name of "Scuites," "Scots," that is, "wanderers or refugees." These people were in Ireland divided into eighteen tribes, retaining the language, customs, and manners of the Celtæ in general.

The form of their government was a mixture of aristocracy and monarchy, but the Druids bore supreme sway. These sacred chiefs preserved their empire over the minds of the people by asserting their intercourse with heaven, and by the profession of magic and divination.

The mysteries which enveloped their worship, and the cruel rites which accompanied it, created a profound awe in the uninitiated, and a deep personal veneration for the ministering individuals of this sacred order; and as in all ages and in all countries there must be always artful and ambitious spirits, the order of the Druids opened an ample field, and offered powerful incitements for the operation of those passions which are in their very nature inordinate, and hence was easily extended their power and authority over secular as well as religious affairs. These ministers and judges were chosen from the highest ranks, and by their knowledge of the sciences and their study of nature, they doubtless strengthened their power and preserved their empire over their disciples in those days of imperfect knowledge, when the principle of terror was easily excited by any thing uncommon, interpreted to suit the purposes of the artful and designing agents.

Whoever refused obedience to the mandates of the Druids was declared by them impious and accursed, was forbidden to enjoy the benefits of their sacrifices, and of their worship, and was solemnly classed with the most wicked. The tremendous mysteries of their religion were usually buried in the gloom of the thickest woods, the

sacred branches were too often sprinkled with human gore. We are informed, that it was the custom of the Gallic Druids to set up an immense gigantic figure of a man formed of wicker, in the texture of which they entwined numerous human victims, and then consumed the whole as an acceptable offering to their gods !

They professed a belief in the immortality of the soul and the metempsychosis. The order was divided into six classes, having a chief or arch Druid in every nation. This superior had absolute authority over the rest, and was succeeded by the most considerable of his survivors. The arch Druid was distinguished by wearing an oaken crown, and bearing a sceptre. His form was completely draped in flowing robes. The inferior Druids wore no crown, but were habited in a sleeved tunic under a kind of surplice, and bore a crescent the apparent size of the moon when she has passed her first quarter; and as it was at that time they cut the sacred mistletoe, perhaps it was the symbol of the class who officiated at that ceremony. The highest religious regard was paid by the Druids both to the oak and the mistletoe: not any of their sacred rites were performed without the leaves and branches of the oak; and whenever they found the mistletoe growing on those sacred trees, they announced that it was sent from heaven, and was a sign that the tree was chosen by God. The mistletoe, however, being rarely found on the oak, when discovered it was distinguished by great ceremonies: they called it by a name which signified "the curer of all ills," and having duly prepared their feasts and sacrifices near the favoured tree, they brought to it two white bulls, whose horns were then for the first time tied. The Druid, habited in a white robe, ascended the tree, and with a golden pruning-hook severed the

mistletoe, which was received in a white sagram or sheet by the attendant Druids; they then sacrificed the victims, praying that God would bless his own gift to those on whom he bestowed it. The younger Druids were beardless, but the elder wore theirs very long: they passed through six gradations or classes before they arrived at the summit of their dignity. The first, or plain priest's garment, was distinguished only from that of the laity by the colour and shape, and was without ornament. The second rank had a sash reaching from the right shoulder across the body to the bottom of the garment; the third was a broad facing like a scarf, crossed with horizontal stripes reaching round the neck and to the bottom of the robe,—the garment so adjusted was loose and without girdle; the fourth had no ensign of dignity, but of place; the fifth had a broad sash depending from his shoulder across the body and the hind part meeting the front: the sixth was the arch Druid, crowned with sacred oak, and bearing the sceptre of command.

They rose from the office of sacrist to others by interest as well as probation, and the supreme priesthood descended frequently from father to son. Like the tribe of Levi among the Jews, the Druids were, by virtue of their sacred office, exempt from war and from tribute. Youth were instructed by the Druids, retiring with them for that purpose into deep caves and almost inaccessible forests, where they remained under tuition sometimes twenty years. It may therefore be well imagined how ample were the opportunities possessed by the preceptors to mould their pupils at their will, and to make them subservient to the extension and stability of their power. We are informed, that they practised human sacrifices on the remarkable principle that the anger of the

immortal gods could be no otherwise appeased than by paying the life of one man for that of another.*

Historians, however, are agreed, that although the religion of the Druids was of such a dreadful and terrifying nature, yet, generally speaking, the high and extended power they possessed was not abused by acts of oppression, and that they carefully preserved that sanctity of manners which they were conscious was essential to its stability.

The chiefs of the several tribes executed the laws, but the supreme legislative power rested in the Druids. In periods of imminent danger, they possessed the privilege of uniting the several tribes under one head, and at the conclusion of hostilities the universal chief thus nominated laid down his office. He received, on entering it, the title of Vergobretus, or “ the man to judge.” At length various causes combined to shake the supreme power of the Druids. History is replete with instances to prove how difficult it is to preserve the success which ambition has attained ; mankind continually experience new excitements, new agitations, from new scenes, and new events. The march of mind still proceeding, however slowly, opens to view more and more the encroachments on its freedom, and the obstacles which impede its progress.

As society advanced contentions arose, the people engaged in warfare, and becoming attached to its powerful excitements, the numbers who initiated themselves into the order of the Druids became proportionably diminished, and consequently the power vested in them also declined.

* The altar of the stupendous temple of Stonehenge, upon which human victims were offered, consists of one large dark-coloured stone of a different nature from those of which the rest of the circle is composed.

The people even so far dared to throw off the yoke as to choose the Vergobretus without the concurrence of the hierarchy, and he, retained his office against their will, hitherto regarded as the supreme law. The retention of power strengthened the interest of the Vergobretus among the tribes, where private views, from the changes which had taken place in their relative situations, were hostile to the permanence of the druidical authority.

The Druids, however, did not passively submit to this innovation on their prerogative, so materially affecting their general influence. They proceeded to assert their supremacy, and to vindicate the honour of their order by endeavouring to resume their privilege of chusing the Vergobretus. A certain number of the order were deputed to attend the acting Vergobretus, and to command him in the name of the whole sacred body to lay down his office. This was refused, and the denunciations of the offended hierarchy contemned.

The limitation of their power was but the prelude to its extinction. The minds of men had received an impulse in direct opposition to that power. The Druids were hurried by the force of opinion to the brink of a rapid and ruinous descent, resistance was vain; civil wars precipitated them from their height almost to the extermination of their once resistless order. The few who escaped from the effects of this popular revolution, retired to the dark recesses of their consecrated groves, and the deep and solemn caves once the haunts of meditation, to prepare them for worldly action, but now the refuge where they must remain unheeded by a people, converted from servile devotees into sanguinary foes.

A total disregard to the sacred order and to its functions, was the consequence of the scorn and

hatred which had produced this singular revolution, and the religion of the Druids became altogether enfeebled, and at length nearly extinct.

The Bards, however, an inferior class of them, shared not the ill fortune of their superiors, but were retained by the Chiefs to minister to their vanity, and excite the passions of their followers by reciting their heroic deeds, and by their recording songs to give immortality to their fame. These bards preserved society from sinking into a state of utter barbarism; for originally the disciples of the superior Druids, who were the depositaries of learning, their ideas were in a degree enlarged and their minds expanded. With imaginations vivid, high wrought, and unchecked, with feelings ardent, romantic, and strong, and passions powerfully excited by the plaudits of the listening chiefs these traditionary historians could expressively describe acts of heroic virtue, and in language glowing and animated, dwell on the virtues and exploits of those heroes they served, or the high qualities which had ennobled their ancestors. Thus did they infuse a generous ardour and spirit of emulation into the bosoms of those young heroes who listened to their songs, addressed as they were to their love of fame, and teaching the high moral lesson that it could only be obtained by their virtues and exploits, tempered by moderation, humanity, and clemency; so the poet beautifully expresses the character of his hero Fingal. "None ever went sad from Fingal! O, Oscar! bend the strong in arms, but spare the feeble hand. Be thou a stream of many tides against the foes of thy people, but like the gale that moves the grass, to those who ask thine aid; so Frenmor lived; such Trathal was; and such has Fingal been. My arm was the support of the injured, the weak rested behind the lightning of my steel."

Supposing this and other similar characters are pourtrayed in the vivid colouring of poetic praise, yet the very praise denotes the estimation which those moral qualities described bore in society, and hence we shall cease to wonder that many noble passions were excited, cherished and frequently displayed in multiplied instances of virtuous action in peace, and genuine magnanimity in war.

We have spoken generally of the Druids, and the decline of their power. In Ireland, that decline is stated to have taken place from the era of Cormac O'Conn, who was the most renowned of all the pagan Irish monarchs. The commencement of his reign is fixed about the middle of the third century.

The annalists dwell with poetical enthusiasm on the splendour and magnificence of his court, his warlike sons, his ten beauteous daughters, his military appointments, his revision of the laws, endowments of learned seminaries, the conquest over his rebellious subjects, the resignation of his dignity, and philosophical retreat. It was the liberal and penetrating spirit of this highly-gifted monarch, which first led his subjects to regard with jealousy the inordinate power of the Druids, and to him is principally attributed the gradual decline of their order in Ireland, although it was not entirely extinct on the arrival of Patrick as missionary, as authentic records mention the name of a Druid who violently opposed the introduction of the Christian faith, warning the monarch of the heavy and oppressive taxations which the people must suffer from the new religious establishment.

No correct history however of Ireland can be given prior to the mission of St. Patrick, (for such in courtesy we shall call him,) all accounts being dubious and uncertain, resting only upon dark

and contradictory traditions. It has been observed there are three stages in human society: the first is the result of consanguinity and the natural affection of the members of a family to one another; the second begins when property is established, and men enter into certain imperfect associations for mutual defence against the invasions and injustice of neighbours; mankind submit, in the third, to certain laws and constitutions of government to which they trust for the safety of their persons and properties.

As the first is formed on nature, so of course it is the most disinterested and noble; men in the last have leisure to cultivate the mind, and to restore it by reflection to a primæval dignity of sentiment; the intermediate state is the region of barbarism and ignorance. About the middle of the fifth century the Irish were advanced to the second stage, and were consequently influenced by those circumscribed views and sentiments which distinguish barbarity. It was about this time that an overruling Providence decreed that the benign ray of Christianity should beam on their darkened hemisphere. But ere we enter upon the detail of that important event, we must observe, that amidst the various and heterogeneous accounts derived from the poetical annals of Ireland previous to the fifth century, though we cannot mark with precision any distinct detail, yet many lively pictures of manners are presented to our contemplation,—of a brave people searching for new settlements, establishing themselves in a fertile land, making division of the territory, and anxiously devising means to give strength and stability to the possessions acquired by their valour. Noble instances of courage, generous effusions of benevolence, ardent resentments, desperate and vindictive outrages are found in full

exercise during the formation and organization of the infant society.

Those who possessed a portion of superior knowledge quickly perceived the power it gave them to influence the fancies and passions of the multitude, and the facilities it opened to obtain the popular confidence and veneration. Such is the natural homage that mental vigour commands; hence the ministers of religion were regarded as superior intelligences, were referred to by contending parties, and consulted as oracles on every subject, whether of law or policy. The gradual and imperceptible progress of social order, however, rendered a settled code essential to general well being, by taking cognizance of, and regulating the actions both of the legislator and people. These benefits were felt and acknowledged, but still in the infancy of society the violence of passion resists the salutary curb, and proves superior to just restraint. Turbulent spirits impatiently avenge their own cause, and authority still recurs to force and to the summary decision of arms, upon any real or fancied invasion of its just or assumed rights.

Such was the state of the Irish previous to the introduction of that faith which promulgates peace and goodwill towards men, and which has such a tendency to promote both, to ameliorate the condition, to calm the passions, to soften the sentiments and to polish the manners of any community receiving it with sincerity. But these effects were, as might naturally be expected, sadly counteracted by the inveterate and barbarous superstition of the people, which mingling itself with ill understood Christian principles and the profane and absurd ceremonies of paganism produced that combination of violence, abject devotion, and puerile folly, which deformed

the religion of the age. The object rather than the spirit of religion was changed.

The people after embracing Christianity retained the superstitions of paganism, and such of them as assumed the sacerdotal habit, still cherished their original habits and prejudices, and emerged but very little from the dark clouds of ignorance; the pure principles of Christianity were lost in the mazes of superstitious external ceremonies—these, rather than the rectifying the wayward will and the purifying the heart, were deemed essential by the professors. The clergy with a pernicious emulation of the heathen priests, whose influence had been founded upon the ignorance of their disciples, sought also to extend and establish their authority by confining knowledge to their own order.

Those of the ignorant multitude who received the gospel regarded the Bishop of Rome (through whose authority it was conveyed to them) as the successor of their arch Druid or high-priest; and as the tremendous Druid had enjoyed during the darkness of paganism a boundless power, and had been treated with a veneration which, from its excess, degenerated into terror, so upon their conversion to Christianity they naturally (however absurdly) conferred upon the chief of the bishops the same honours, and a similar authority as had formerly been vested in their arch Druid; and it will readily be supposed by those who mark the passions of our nature as they are developed and excited by worldly interests, that the Roman pontiffs were not backward to receive these august privileges.

For at the period of which we speak the arrogance and pride of the servants of the meek and lowly Jesus were arrived at a great height. The bishops, particularly those of superior rank, occu-

pied in self-indulgence, created delegates or ministers who managed for them the affairs of their dioceses, and a species of courts were gradually formed, where these haughty ecclesiastics gave audience and received the homage of the superstitious multitude. The corruption of that order who were appointed to promote by their doctrine and example the sacred interests of piety and virtue, will appear less surprising to us when we consider the multitudes of persons who were every where admitted without examination into the body of the clergy, the largest proportion of whom it is to be feared had no other views than the enjoyment of indolent repose or of obtaining advantages by imposing upon the credulity of the ignorant, for Christianity as it then existed was perverted into a system peculiarly fitted to enchain the mental energies by sagaciously discovering the springs of human action, and controlling them so as to render them subservient to selfishness and corrupt passions. The unguarded conduct of the superstitious favoured and cherished the growth of this spiritual despotism, which progressively became so commanding as to enchain and enslave all Europe. Ignorant and unconscious of the fetters they were forming for themselves, the people by giving the bishop of Rome the same privileges as their heathen high-priest, perpetuated a series of pernicious consequences, as their infatuation greatly served to inflate the arrogance of the pontiffs, and gave to the see of Rome that high pre-eminence and despotic authority in civil and political, as well as ecclesiastical affairs which have produced so much contention and so much misery. It is certainly from such imitation of the pagan superstitions, we may trace the erroneous and presumptuous opinion, that such individuals who were by

the fiat of the pontiff, or any of his ministers, excluded from the communion of the church, forfeited thereby not only their civil rights and advantages as citizens, but even the common claims and privileges of humanity.* Yet great as was the evil we have been contemplating, as tending so lamentably to obstruct the growth of genuine and vital religion, it will be found that many germs of this yet remained uninjured, and though shaded and concealed by the noxious weeds of superstition and the ungenial spirit of the age, were prepared to spring forth when circumstances proved favourable to their expansion. Genuine piety seems evidently to have actuated the first missionaries to our favoured shores as well as those of Ireland, and their zeal, their perseverance, and withal the excellence of the faith they diffused, made their labours successful.

Although the influence of pagan prejudices and the habits it had generated continued long to operate, and produced that mingled character in religion and morals which marked the period, yet the introduction of Christianity could not but be a positive benefit in every degree of its prevalence. "Wherever it has penetrated" says an interesting historian "it has appeared like the guardian angel of the human race, meliorating the heart and enlightening."

It is a system directly tending to soften the asperities of the human character, to remove its selfishness, that bitter foe to happiness, to restrain its malignity, and to animate its virtues. Hence, in that barbarous age its influence must have been most salutary. If it did not eradicate the

* Among the ancient Romans when a man was cursed for any act whoever would, might kill him; and among the Gauls, such as obeyed not their priests, were forbidden the sacrifices or to unite in worship.

vices of him by whom it was professed, it taught him to abandon many, and threw a shade of odium on them that roused the principle of shame. It gradually implanted a moral sense in the bosom of its converts, and taught the mind the habit of moral reasoning and its application to life; thus its effects on the poorer classes of society must have been great and important. Before its introduction, war and depredation were the principal sources of subsistence among the lower classes; but when the Christian clergy were established and monasteries arose, the poor were taken under their protection, fed and nourished by their bounty or by their influence on the bounty of others. They were thus gradually rescued from a life of plunder and rapine, and in consequence the habits these induced declined in proportion. But in nothing was the introduction of Christianity more strikingly beneficial than by introducing a moral and intellectual education; it could not be known unless some portion of literature was attained or diffused, it therefore was actually the introducer of learning in those countries where it was received. That these were the moral effects flowing from the introduction of Christianity into our island we have sufficient historic evidence: of the political effects we can only admit they were as good as might reasonably be expected in an age of general darkness; "but it must be confessed" remarks the historian before quoted "that they were not so beneficial as its individual influence." But the defects, which we shall have ample reason to remark as we proceed, were the faults of the system into which Christianity was distorted and not of the religion inculcated by the scriptures; monkish Christianity was not apostolic Christianity. Religion is calculated to mingle with all the

duties of life, to be the governing principle round which they may all revolve in regular harmony. Its discipline is that of affection exacting of us to unite our happiness with virtue.

But the system which the papal hierarchy established was an attempt to transfer the government of the world into the hands of ecclesiastics, under the name of Christianity, but it was certainly by a complete departure from its spirit and precepts. The religion of the gospel favours not the gloomy ascetic or the melancholy recluse, consuming life in mortifications and cruel self-discipline ; it breathes love and goodwill towards men ; is social, cheerful, benevolent, kind, mingling gracefully with all our innocent pleasures, and giving dignity to the most trivial pursuits, forbidding only those which cannot be indulged without debasing ourselves and injuring others ; in short, it is the noblest gift of happiness to man. We may imagine every pagan singing with the candour of the convinced Coifi : “ Formerly I understood nothing that I was worshipping, and the more industriously I sought the truth the less of it I could find, but in this system (Christianity) the gift of eternal life and happiness is clearly unfolded to us ; therefore, O king, I advise that our useless temples be immediately consigned to flames and execration.” *

* See the account of the conversion of Edwin king of Northumbria, in various historians.

CHAPTER II.

Germanus the preceptor of Patrick—Biographic sketch of St. Patrick—Armagh—Doctrines taught by St. Patrick—Various Motives produce conversion—Monastic institutions rapidly increase—Influence of fear—Miracles—One relating to St. Patrick—Growing influence of the Clergy—The improvement produced by them—Hibernia the seat of learning from the sixth to the close of the seventh century—The effects arising therefrom—Colum-kill—Aidan, his mission to Northumbria and character; patronized by Oswald—The piety of Oswald; his laudable endeavours to improve his subjects; his character—Piety flourished in Northumbria—Desired Union between the Roman and British churches respecting the observation of Easter, effected—Increasing power of the bishops of Rome, gradually freed from the civil restraints it was subject to—Augmentation of the papal power creates disputes and divisions—Irish missionaries renowned for piety and learning—Irish schools famed for their superiority during seventh century; Alfred king of Northumbria studied there—Columban, an Irish monk, his missions—Killian, his missions and tragical death—Religion and learning increase in Ireland, but decline in Great Britain during the fifth and sixth centuries; the probable causes; the clouds dispersed in the seventh century—Labours of pious men—Anglo-Saxons ruled by a succession of great men.

FOURTH CENTURY.

IN sketching the biography of the Irish apostle Patrick, we are naturally led to the reference of the individual who had a considerable share in the formation of his character and mind, as well as the direction of their energies.

This individual was Germanus, bishop of Auxerre in Gaul, one of the greatest ornaments of the Christian church at that early period. Endued with a persevering zeal, unblemished integrity, undaunted firmness, unwearied activity, and a

versatility of genius which readily adapted itself to the present exigence ; this remarkable man was a fit instructor to form the mind and habits of a missionary at that important period of the Christian era. It was at Auxerre, in the exemplary discharge of his high duties as a dignitary of the church, that Germanus assisted in forming the mind of Patrick, and was greatly instrumental in effecting the mission of that father of the Hibernian church, who, during the period of eighteen years; enjoyed the advantage of being under his tuition. From the judicious and familiar illustrations of the inspired writings imparted by the pious Germanus, Patrick derived a large portion of his biblical knowledge. That he was a pupil worthy of such a tutor was sufficiently proved by the subsequent acts of his life, we shall therefore proceed to relate the brief account of it (if divested of legend) which has come down to us, regretting that it has not been transmitted more circumstantially. Sufficient, however, is recorded to prove beyond all doubt his perseverance, resolution, and patience, as well as his penetration and address in converting a barbarous people, and rendering himself revered and beloved by those whose errors he fearlessly reprov'd. The Irish people were in some degree prepared for the preaching of their great apostle by the labours of some former missionaries, particularly Palladius, subsequently first bishop of Scotland, the success of whose mission did not bear any proportion to his laborious and pious endeavours among the rude inhabitants of the island.

St. Patrick was born April 5, 373, of a good family at Kirk Patrick, near Dumbarton, North Britain. His baptismal name Succ'eath, signifies in the British language "valiant in war." On some incursions of exiles from Ireland he was

when very young taken prisoner, and carried into that kingdom, where he continued six years in the service of a chief named Milcho, who had bought him of three others, whence Patrick acquired the name of Cathraig or Cather-Tigh, namely four families. During this period of captivity he evinced the energy and activity of his mind by making himself master of the Irish language, and at length with much hazard effected his escape, and returned to Scotland. His mind however had received its impulse, he deeply reflected upon what he had observed in Ireland, and he formed the design of endeavouring to convert the people from their senseless and debasing superstition. "It is beautiful," says the pious Milner, "to observe the motions of Providence in causing the confusions of war and desolation to be subservient to the propagation of the gospel." This was strikingly displayed in the case of Patrick. The better to qualify himself for the arduous and important labour which he contemplated, and meditated upon with all the intensity of an ardent and reflecting mind, he travelled to the continent in order to pursue his studies under the direction of his mother's uncle, Martin,* bishop of Tours, who ordained him

* Martin was a native of Italy, and in his youth served in the army under Constantius and Julian, but against his will in obedience to his father, who was a soldier. When only ten years of age he had voluntarily gone to the church, and given his name as a catechumen or candidate for baptism. At twelve he had a desire to lead a monastic life, but compelled to military service, he was remarkable for his exemp-

tion from the vices of the profession, his liberality to the poor, and his reservation of nothing for himself out of the pay which he received, except what was just necessary for daily food. At eighteen he was baptized, and two years after left the army. Sometime after falling into the hands of robbers among the Alps, he was delivered bound to one of them, to be plundered. This robber conducted him to a retired

deacon. Under the discipline and instruction of this prelate he remained several years, and on

place and enquired who he was: "I am a Christian," replied Martin. "Are you not afraid," rejoined the bandit? "I was never more at my ease, because I know the mercy of the Lord to be present in all trials. I am more concerned for you, who by your course of life render yourself unfit to partake of the mercy of Christ." The robber struck with the heroic sincerity of his defenceless captive, besought his blessing and instruction. Martin opened simply the Christian scheme to his attentive listener; conviction impressed his mind, he professed his belief and entreated the continued prayers of his pious instructor, whom he respectfully conducted to a place of safety. The new convert persevered in godliness and it is from his testimony we receive the account.

We follow not the credulous tales invented of this esteemed bishop, for little interesting can be gathered from accounts derived from a period when the human mind was clouded by ignorance and superstition. We shall only add that Martin was with difficulty persuaded to quit his monastery in order to engage in the arduous duties of the church as bishop of Tours, to which he was called by the universal voice of the people. He still preserved his monastic taste, and had a monastery two miles only from the city. Here he resided

with eighty disciples who followed his example. They lived in common, with extreme austerity, the celebration of his supposed miracles had a powerful effect on the ignorant Gauls, every common action being magnified into a prodigy. His integrity and piety were unquestionable; disfigured as was the latter with monastic superstition, and the former in some instances bordering upon a false humility. His patience and charity were exemplary. Surely we may refer the peculiar bias of St. Patrick's mind to the influential character of his revered relative, a character he most likely had studied; it was calculated to awaken enthusiasm and excite emulation. Youth contemplating such a character naturally would determine like it to "act a noble part." There is a circumstance connected with this brief notice of Martin which displays in a striking manner the peculiar spirit of the times, and the inconsistencies to which even the best men are liable. While Martin lived with all the austerity and simplicity of an anchorite, he regarded the office of a presbyter of the church as of so high and eminent a nature, that he maintained at a public entertainment that even the Emperor was inferior in degree to one of that order. This sufficiently proves the arrogance which had crept into the system

the decease of the bishop became the pupil of Germanus, who ordained him priest, and gave him his third name, Mawn, or Magninim. "Germanus" says an ancient writer, "considering him alike distinguished in religion, eminent for virtue, and steadfast in doctrine, and regretting that he should remain in a manner inactive in the spiritual vineyard, greatly encouraged his going to Ireland.

Thus confirmed in his long meditated design Patrick resorted to the chosen scene of his pious labours, and intent upon accomplishing his object was not discouraged by the ill success he first experienced, the Irish rejecting his doctrines, as they had previously done those of Pallidius, and four other missionaries, who had preceded him.*

of the church, and evidences its early departure from the humble spirit of its Divine Founder.

* Pelagianism entered the church in the fifth century, and in a greater or less degree has continued to our own times, its doctrines are subversive of the foundation of Christianity, as they question the operation of the Holy Spirit. Pelagius denied the doctrine of grace, contending that men may arrive at the height of purity supported by mere human nature, exclusive of the operations of the Divine Spirit. Pelagius was a native of Britain and was in his own time called Brito. He had for his coadjutor Celestius, an Irishman. The great Augustine allows the genius and capacity of both these individuals to have been of the

first order; and Jerome speaking of the humility which was directly opposed by the proud tenets of the Pelagian heresy, observes beautifully, "This is the only perfection of men, to know themselves imperfect."

In avowing his doctrine, "That man needs not the Holy Spirit to render him truly pious and holy, but has sufficient resources in his own nature for that end," Pelagius mingled much artifice and evasion speaking with such ambiguity of the doctrine of grace that it might mean anything, but a positive influence on the heart, imparting a power to will and to act, agreeably to the pleasure of God, and exalting the soul to communion with the Creator and Redeemer.

The heresy of Arius tended to lessen the belief of the Divinity

Patrick in consequence returned to Gaul and passed some time with his enlightened tutor Germanus, whose conversation and example inspired him with renewed zeal. Strongly recommended by this valuable friend, to Celestine, the then Roman pontiff, as a man worthy of his highest confidence, and as possessing qualifications eminently fitting him to become an apostle, Patrick resorted to the papal court.

His ecclesiastical merit was not passed over by Celestine, but approved by the judgment and confirmed by the blessing of the apostolic father.

of the Son of God, and professes to explain by reason, the mysteries which we are required to believe on divine testimony alone.

He maintained that the Son of God was totally and essentially distinct from the Godhead; that he was indeed the first and noblest of those beings whom God had created, the instrument by whose subordinate operation he formed the universe, therefore inferior to the Father both in nature and in dignity. Also that the Holy Ghost was not God, but created by the power of the Son. He owned that the Son was the Word, but denied that Word to have been eternal. He also maintained that Christ had nothing of man in him but the flesh, to which the Word was joined which was the same as the soul in men. "Arius" says Milner "was by nature formed to deceive; understanding and capacity will command our respect, and

these were undoubtedly possessed by Arius."

In his behaviour and manner of life he was severe and grave. In his person tall and venerable, and in his dress almost monastic. He was agreeable and captivating in conversation, and well skilled in logic, and in all the improvements of the human mind in estimation at the period in which he lived. (the 4th Century). Cicero's words with little variation, in his masterly character of Catiline, might be applied to Arius: "Had he not possessed some apparent virtues he would not have been able to form so great a design, nor to have proved so formidable an adversary." He who does much mischief in misleading others, must at least have a fair appearance of morals. This heresy, assuming perhaps different names, is by no means an exploded doctrine even in our own times, but may rather be considered as increasing.

Patrick once more proceeded to Ireland, having previously been consecrated bishop by the Pope, who gave him his most familiar name Patricius, expressive of his honourable descent, and to give weight and lustre to the commission with which he was charged to convert the Irish. The first fruit of his mission was the conversion of Sinell, eighth in descent from Cormac, King of Leinster, but not meeting with the encouragement of his labours which he wished in the first scene of his mission, the zealous Patrick proceeded to Dublin, and from thence to Ulster, where he founded a church, afterwards the famous abbey of Saul, in the county of Down, remarkable for its position, for having originally been a barn, its greatest length reached from north to south.

After labouring with indefatigable zeal and patience in his great work during seven years, unawed by opposition, unchecked by difficulties, undaunted by dangers he extended his zealous labours to the Isle of Man, having engaged the services of several eminent men to assist him in his important work. He met with success in these endeavours to evangelize the rude inhabitants of Man, and founded a bishopric. Having effected this service to the island he returned to Armagh, the see of which he founded three years previous, and there continuing his meritorious and unwearied exertions, he in a few years effected the conversion of Ireland. Armagh was named the metropolitan see, and Patrick consecrated archbishop.

He also founded there a priory of Augustine canons, dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, and a house of canonesses of the same order, under the discipline of Serpita his sister. The spirit of the age is exemplified in the name of this religious female establishment, it being called "Temple na

firta," or the house of miracles. St. Patrick after his return from the Isle of Man, passed the remainder of his eventful and useful life between the monasteries of Armagh and Saul, superintending and enforcing the great plan of doctrine and discipline which he had established. In order to ensure by every human means within his power the stability of his important work, this great man founded schools for the instruction of youth and ignorance, and at length closed his holy ministry and life at Saul abbey in the 120th year of his age, March 17th, A. D. 493. He was afterwards interred at Down, in the same grave with St. Brigid and St. Columb; his immediate successor in the see was St. Binen, or Begnus. Armagh was held in the highest estimation and veneration not only by bishops and priests, but also by kings and princes on account of the meritorious labours of this great father of the Irish church, who had so largely contributed to the temporal and eternal good of his converts.*

* Armagh on the river Kallin gives name to the county, and is the see of the primate of Ireland; here was anciently a monastery built by St. Columb, about 610. The cathedral has been often burnt, but as often rebuilt and enlarged, particularly by Patrick Scanlain, about 1262. His successor Nicholas, son of Molissa, beside books, rich ecclesiastical vestments, and other things bestowed on it an annual pension of twenty marks; he appropriated also to his see the manor of Dromyskin. This city was first subjected to the English by John de Courcy, but subsequently

entirely destroyed by Tir'Oen, or O'Neal, in the reign of Elizabeth. It was however afterwards recovered, rebuilt, and garrisoned by the English.

The see of Armagh is valued in the King's books by an extent taken anno 30th Henry VIII., at £183. 17s. 5½d. Irish money per ann., which amounts to £137. 18s. 0¾d., English, exchange being then one-fourth. But by an extent returned in the 15th James I. it is valued at £400. sterling per annum, and pays so much first fruits to the present time. It is reputed to be worth annually £8000. The chapter of Ar-

It has been asserted by an eminent writer that the doctrines taught by St. Patrick were free from the errors of the church of Rome; admitting that they were so, we ought not to be surprised that they were not so deeply imbibed nor so blended with the principles of the people as to effect any rapid change of national manners; for while we speak of the gradual conversion of a people, and award a just praise to the persevering agents whose zeal and labours effected it, we must also acknowledge that many combining motives may render conversion more a matter of policy than a real change of heart. Fear of punishment, the prospect of secular advantage, and the desire of obtaining succour against their enemies from the countenance and persuasions of the holy men, whose superior knowledge, if not their sanctity of life, made objects of popular reverence, added to the supposed miraculous influence of their religion, were doubtless with the many, the prevailing motives to renounce the service of their gods, who had been proved impotent to save.* Accordingly we find that in Ireland as

magh is composed of five dignitaries and four prebendaries, who have voices in every capitular act. The dignitaries are thus ranked, viz. a dean, chanter, chancellor, treasurer, and archdeacon; there are also eight vicars choral, and an organist attendant on the service of the cathedral. The vicars choral were anciently fewer, and of the number only one priest; primate Marsh added another priest, but without increasing the number of vicars. In 1720 primate Lindsay obtained a new charter for

enlarging the number of the said vicars to eight, and laid out upwards of £4000. on a purchase in augmentation of the estate of the choir.

* Among the many instances of this, is one related in the English history respecting Edwin, king of the Northumbrians in the seventh century, when upon his anxious enquiry as to the truth of that religion promulgated by Paulinus, he held a consultation with his friends and counsellors, "What is," said he, "this hitherto unheard of doctrine,

well as in other countries which in general terms are said to have received the gospel, many are the instances recorded in which the converts after being initiated by baptism into the church, apostatized from their sacred vows, and dishonoured their Christian profession by acts totally inconsistent with its spirit. These facts tend but to prove the inherent evil of our nature, and to illustrate in a forcible manner the great corruption of manners which powerfully counteracted the pious labourers in the Christian vineyard, even when the doctrines they had scattered had been received in an apparently genial soil. Yet though yielding little genuine fruit, the principles of Christianity were not falsified. They must necessarily however imperceptibly refine, harmonize, and elevate the human mind, and in fact they did so at the period of which we speak, even in the imperfect manner in which they were inculcated, by *restraining*, though they did not *eradicate* the national vices of the Irish.

It was at this early period of the Irish conversion that monastic institutions multiplied almost incredibly.

Monks, who previously to the fifth century had

this new worship?" Cofti, the chief of the pagan priests answered, "See you, O king, what this is which is lately preached to us? I declare most frankly, what I have found to be true, that the religion we have hitherto followed is of no value. If the gods could do anything they would more particularly distinguish me with their favours who have served them so diligently. If the new doctrine be really better, let us embrace it."

The result is well known, that the king, all his nobles, and many of his people received the Christian faith. The whole account is highly interesting and affecting as given by the Venerable Bede, who relates many instances of the peace, order, and justice which prevailed during the reign of Edwin, proving not only his own sincere reception of the gospel, but also that of his court generally speaking:

lived in solitary retreats by themselves, and thought not of assuming any rank among the sacerdotal orders, were, from the commencement of that period of time, gradually distinguished from the populace, and acquired so many honourable privileges, that they were enabled to claim an eminent station among the supports and pillars of the Christian community. Such, indeed, was the fame of their piety and sanctity, that bishops and presbyters were often chosen out of their order; and the practice of erecting edifices and convents, in which the monks and female devotees might serve God in the most uninterrupted manner, was carried to great excess. Hence a numerous body of ecclesiastics, both secular and regular, quickly peopled Ireland, frequently became umpires between contending chieftains; and if unable to influence their conduct by reason and religion, they succeeded frequently in alarming them into submission by denunciations of the divine vengeance against their excesses. When fear has once gained an entrance into the soul, and that of a mighty but undefined evil, most powerful are its operations upon every faculty.

Unskilful must be the hand, that in possession of such an engine can fail to subdue the most daring mind in which there lurks one particle of superstition; but employed by individuals at once bold and active, frequently also gifted with various other commanding qualities—clear ideas, resolute will, ambitious emulation, and a courage which brings them fearlessly into action, we may easily understand the powerful influence of the Romish denunciations on weak ignorant minds, tortured by guilt, conflicting with passion, or enfeebled by superstition. “The simplicity and ignorance of the many,” says Mosheim, “furnished ample occasion for the exercise of those pious frauds which

early disgraced the Christian church, and the ingenuity of the impostures increased in proportion to the credulity of the multitude, while the sagacious who perceived them, were constrained to silence, through the dangers that threatened their lives and properties, if they endeavoured to remove the veil which concealed the secret but powerful machinery by which the fears of the many were acted upon."

The pretended miracles were regarded with awful silence and deep religious horror. We shall recite only a single instance of this species of craft, as it is an illustration of our subject, and refers to the zealous labours of St. Patrick; though it is utterly inconsistent with every account we have on record of the simple integrity of his character, to suppose that he descended to such means to effectuate his desired and laudable ends.

There is in the county of Donnegal, or Tirconnel, near the source of the Liffy, a cave, called by the modern Irish *Ellan n' Fradatory*, or the island of Purgatory, and Patrick's Purgatory. They affirm with a pious credulity, doubtless derived from father to son during many succeeding ages, that St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, or some abbot of that name, they cannot precisely determine which, obtained of God by his earnest prayers, that the pains and torments which await the wicked after this life, might be here set forth to view, in order more effectually to recover the Irish from their sinful and heathenish errors.

It is easy to trace the invention of this story to the pernicious power gained over the imaginations of the people, and those who attained this ascendancy soon learned to derive emolument from the public credulity and veneration, while important privileges and exemptions were granted to the

administrators of those spiritual benefits to which man naturally clings for support and comfort. In the midst of every provincial conflict, every domestic strife, the persons and the property of the clergy were preserved inviolate; the infant church was every where nobly endowed, and the prayers of the holy conventual inhabitants repaid or bought by large and voluntary donations. The people were taught to dedicate the first-born of all their cattle to the church, as a matter of indisputable obligation. Many of the clergy, who had acquired riches by the donations and bequests of the pious and superstitious, rose above selfish interests, and applied them to the noblest purposes, regarding themselves strictly but as channels through which the stream of benevolence was to pass in order to fertilize and adorn the country.

Many of the monks, say the historians, fixed their habitations in deserts, which they cultivated with their own hands, and rendered the most delightful spots in the kingdom. These deserts became well polished cities; and it is worthy of remark, that to the monks may be attributed the forming into one civil community the discordant and rival tribes of Ireland, hence they ought justly to be regarded as national benefactors.

In these cities they established schools, in which they educated the youth, not only of the island, but of the neighbouring nations, and under the mild influence of the Christian doctrines Hibernia became the seat of learning from the fifth to the close of the seventh century.

The justly termed Venerable Bede bears testimony, that in the seventh century, during the ecclesiastical power of the revered prelates Finian and Colman, many Anglo Saxons and others retired from their own country into Ireland, either to receive superior instruction, or for the oppor-

tunity of living in monasteries under stricter discipline; and that they were maintained, taught, and furnished with books, by their Irish preceptors and guides without fee or reward.

This is a lively instance and honourable testimony, not only of the superior learning, but also of the generous hospitality and bounty of the early Irish Christians. It cannot be doubted that the collision of minds which such a confluence of foreigners to a retired island in search of instruction must produce, had a powerful effect, in refining and humanizing the manners of the people, as well as to enlarge their mental capacity. When the rest of Europe was sunk in ignorance, and torn with contentions, Ireland shone with lustre as a seat of learning; seven thousand students are said to have studied at Armagh alone, although the seminary of that see was but one of many similar ecclesiastical institutions, in different parts of the island; among which number we may name Innisfallen, Lismore, Kells, Kildare, Kilkenny, Glendalough, Ardfert, &c. * as distinguished for their high ec-

* Innisfallen is an island on the lake of Killarney; in it are the ruins of a very ancient religious house founded by St. Finian, the patron saint of that part of Ireland. To him the cathedral of Aghadoe is also dedicated. The remains of this abbey are very extensive, the situation highly romantic and recluse. Upon the dissolution of religious houses, the possessions of the abbey were granted to Captain R. Callam. St. Finian flourished about the middle of the sixth century. He was descended from the kings of Munster.

In this abbey a chronicle

was kept, often cited by antiquaries, under the title of *Annals of Innisfallen*. These annals inform us, that in 1180, the abbey in which all the gold, silver, and richest goods of the whole country were deposited, as a place of greatest security, was plundered by Mildwin, son of Daniel O'Donoughoe, as was also the church at Ardfert, and many persons were slain in the very cemetery by the Macarty's; but God, as the chronicle says, punished this impiety by the untimely end of some of the authors of it.

Kells, anciently called *Kenanus*, and subsequently *Ken-*

clesiastical consequence, and important civilizing influence. Nor were the labours and talents of the

lis, was one of the most considerable cities in the kingdom. Within a short distance is the church of Senan, and at the south of the church-yard is a round tower 99 feet in height, the roof ending in a point, and near the sumit four windows facing the cardinal points. There was formerly a very celebrated monastery at this place founded in 550 for regular canons, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It owed its origin to St. Columb, to whom the site of the abbey was granted by Dermot Mac'Carval, or Dermot, son of Kervail, king of Ireland. An episcopal see was afterwards formed, which in the 13th century was united to that of Meath.

A priory or hospital was also erected by Walter de Lacie, Lord of Meath, in the reign of Richard the First, for cross-bearers, corruptly crouched friars following the order of St. Augustine.

There was likewise a perpetual chantry of three priests or chaplains in the parish church of Columb in Kells, to celebrate mass daily, one in the Rood chapel, another in St. Mary's, and a third in the chapel of St. Catherine the Virgin.

Kells is also the name of a village, county Kilkenny. It is a very ancient place, and noted for a priory of Augustines, built and richly endowed by Geoffry Fitz-Robert, who came into Ireland with Earl Strongbow.

The prior of this place had the title of Lord Spiritual, and as such sat in the house of peers before the Reformation. The ruins only of this abbey now remain. A synod was held in it, 1152, when John Papano, legate from Rome, made one of the number of bishops that were convened at that time to settle the affairs of the Irish church.

Kildare, capital of the county of the same name. The church of this place was very early erected into a cathedral with episcopal jurisdiction, a dignity which it retains. The cathedral is now, however, in decay. St. Brigid founded a nunnery at Kildare, which afterwards came into the possession of the regular canons of Augustine. This saint deceased Feb. 523, and was interred here, but her remains were afterwards removed to the cathedral of Down. In 638, Aod Dubh, or Black Hugh, King of Leinster, abdicated the throne, and took on him the Augustinian habit in the abbey of Kildare: he was afterwards chosen bishop and abbot. Here also, in 756, Eigliligien, the abbot, who was likewise bishop of Kildare, was killed by a priest, as he was celebrating mass at the altar of St. Brigid. Since which time, no priest whatsoever is allowed to celebrate mass in that church in presence of a bishop.

In 1220, Henri de Londres, archbishop of Dublin, put out

Irish clergy confined to their own country, many resorted to the continent, converted heathens,

the fire called *inextinguishable*, which had been preserved from a very early period by the nuns of St. Brigid. This fire was, however, relighted, and continued to burn till the total suppression of monasteries. There was also at Kildare a grey abbey, erected for friars of the Franciscan order, or, as they are frequently styled, Grey Friars, in 1160, by Lord William de Vesey; but the building was completed by Gerald Fitzmaurice, Lord Offaley. A considerable portion of it yet remains. A house for White Friars was also founded by W. de Vesey in 1290. The round tower is 130 feet high, formed of granite to twelve feet above ground, and finished with common blue stone. Kildare gives title to the family of Fitzgerald. The county of Kildare was anciently called *Chille-dair*, viz. the wood of oaks, from a large forest which comprehended the middle part of the county. In the centre of this forest was an extensive plain, sacred to heathen superstition: it is at present called the *Curragh of Kildare*. At the extremity of this plain, about the commencement of the sixth century, St. Brigid, one of the heathen vestals, on her conversion to the Christian faith, founded, with the assistance of St. Cunleath, a church and monastery, near which, after the manner of the Pagans, the holy sister kept the sacred fire

in a cell, the remains of which are yet visible—a proof of the tenacity of the human mind to early customs and habits.

Kilkenny is capital of the county of the same name, in the province of Leinster. It derives its name from the church or cell of Canie, who was an eminent hermit, and is one of the most elegant cities in Ireland. It is the seat of the bishop of Ossory, which was translated from Agaboe to Ossory, about the end of Henry the Second, by bishop O'Dulhony. That it was once of the greatest consequence is abundantly evident, from the great variety of venerable ruins remaining of churches, monasteries, and abbeys, which even now in their dilapidated state exhibit such specimens of exquisite taste in architecture, as may vie with any modern improvements. The cathedral, situated in a sequestered spot, is a venerable gothic pile built about five hundred years since. Near it is one of those remarkable round towers which have so much engaged the attention of travellers. The bishop's palace is a handsome structure, communicating by a covered way with the church. The college was originally founded by the Ormond family, who also built and endowed a free-school.

There are the ruins of three monasteries, St. John's, St. Francis, and the Black Abbey. Belonging to the latter are

confirmed believers, erected religious houses, and established schools of learning. We are told,

many curious monuments almost buried in the ruins; and the courts of the others are now converted into the inappropriate use of barracks.

Glendalough, otherwise called the Seven Churches, anciently a celebrated town; it is in the county of Wicklow, province of Leinster. The name signifies the valley of the two lakes. In this valley, surrounded by lofty and almost inaccessible mountains, St. Kevin or Cavan, called also St. Coungene, about the middle of the sixth century, founded a monastery, which in a short time, from the sanctity of its founder, was much resorted to. It at length became a bishopric, and a religious city. St. Kevin died June 618, at the advanced age of 120, and on that day annually numbers of persons flock to the seven churches to celebrate the festival of the venerated saint. During the middle ages, Glendalough was held in great esteem, receiving many donations and privileges, its episcopal jurisdiction extending to the walls of Dublin.

About the middle of the 12th century, on some account which does not clearly appear, it was much neglected by the clergy, and became, instead of a holy city, a resort of banditti; wherefore Cardinal Papiron, in 1214, united it to the see of Dublin, which union was confirmed by King John. The O'Tools, chiefs of Ferthuathal,

by the assistance however of the Pope, continued long after this period to elect bishops and abbots to Glendalough, they possessed neither revenues nor authority beyond the district of Tuathal, which was the western part of the county of Wicklow. In consequence of this, the city fell into decay, and had become nearly a desert in 1497, when Denis White, the last titular bishop, surrendered his right in the cathedral church of St. Patrick, Dublin. From the ruins of this ancient city still remaining, it must have been a place of high consequence, containing seven churches and monasteries; small indeed, but built in a neat elegant style, in imitation of the Grecian architecture. The cathedral, the walls of which are yet standing, was dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. South of it is a small church nearly entire, and roofed with stone; and in several parts of the valley are a number of stone crosses, some of which are curiously carved, but without inscriptions.

In the north-west corner of the cemetery belonging to the cathedral, stands a round tower ninety-five feet high, and fifteen in diameter; and in the cemetery of a small church, on the south side of the river called the Rheafert Church, are some tombs with Irish inscriptions, designating them to have been in memory of the O'Tools. In a perpendicular projecting rock

that some Irish ecclesiastics were settled at Glas-tonbury in the reign of Edwin, king of Northumbria, and taught the liberal sciences to the children of the nobility; also that the eccentric and ambitious Dunstan attached himself to their instructions, and diligently explored their books. The ecclesiastics of Ireland had also the merit of converting the ferocious Picts by the ministry of Columb-kill, one of their renowned order, who resorted to the northern parts of Scotland for that pious purpose, and met with great success.

Columb-kill lived thirty-four years after his passage into Britain, and his disciples were distinguished for the holiness and abstemiousness of their lives. Aidan, also an Irishman, was emi-

south of the great lake, thirty yards above the surface of the water, is the celebrated bed of St. Kevin, hewn out of the rock, exceedingly difficult of access, and terrible in prospect. Amongst the ruins have been discovered a number of stones, curiously carved, and containing inscriptions in the Latin, Greek, and Irish languages. At a small distance from St. Kevin's bed, and on the same side of the mountain, are the ruins of a small stone building called St. Kevin's well. In short, there is abundant evidence that Glendalough and its vicinity was sacred ground in the estimation of the primitive Irish Christians.

Ardfert was the ancient capital of Kerry, with an university held in the highest esteem: it is a bishop's see and borough by ancient prescription, and has been held in commendam

with the bishopric of Limerick ever since the restoration. The bishops were formerly styled bishops of Kerry.

St. Brandon, to whom the cathedral is dedicated, had his first rudiments of education at Ardfert under bishop Ert, but finished his studies in Con-naught, St. Jarlath, bishop of Tuam, being his preceptor. The ruins at Ardfert are very extensive. Near the cathedral was what is termed an anchoret tower, the loftiest and finest in the kingdom; it was 120 feet in height. It fell suddenly in 1771. In the several ruined churches are numerous inscriptions round the mouldings of the tombstones; and over an arch behind the late Earl of Glandore's mansion is an inscription in relief, executed in a masterly manner, but characters unknown.

nent as an apostle of Christianity. In the seventh century, Cadwallan, one of the British kings composing the octarchy, tyrannized over the subjects of the deceased royal convert, Edwin, king of Northumbria, till at length Oswald his nephew vanquished and slew him, establishing himself in the kingdom. The piety of Oswald was sincere; he had in his youth lived an exile in Ireland, where he had been baptized. Influenced by the genuine spirit of religion, he earnestly laboured to instruct his rude subjects, and to advance their moral tuition. He accordingly sent for a pastor from the sister kingdom. This ecclesiastic made many fruitless attempts to fulfil the wishes of Oswald; but at length, wearied with his ill success, returned to Ireland, complaining of the intractable disposition of the Northumbrians. "It seems to me," remarked Aidan, who was an auditor of these complaints, "that your austere manners and severity of conduct towards them, was unsuitable to their state of extreme ignorance; they should be treated like infants with milk, till they become capable of stronger meat."

With all the boasted refinement and candour of the nineteenth century, perhaps we should find it difficult to meet with a sentiment more just, or sagacity more penetrating, than is contained in this simple remark of a monk of the seventh. The consequence of his frankness, was what perhaps Aidan little expected, he was himself deputed by an Irish council to enter on the mission. The character of Aidan would have done honour to the purest and most refined times: he was a shining example of true godliness, and with the active but temperate zeal of a faithful apostle, laboured to convert infidels, to strengthen the weak, to confirm the wavering. He gave to the indigent what he received from the opulent, and employed him-

self with his pious associates in the continual study of the scriptures. Strictly avoiding every thing luxurious, and every appearance of secular avarice and ambition, he redeemed captives with the money given him by the great and the pious, carefully instructing the emancipated individuals, and fitting many for the ministry. We may the more confidently depend upon the accounts we have of this eminent man, as they are derived from those who regarded him as a schismatic in the observation of Easter, in which the church of Rome differed from the British and Irish churches, excepting only the Saxons. Augustine and his immediate successors, had ineffectually laboured to bring all the British churches into a conformity with that of Rome, in this and other respects. Nor ought we to impute unworthy motives to those pious prelates for seeking an unity they believed favourable to the general interests of the Christian church, for their constancy in labour, steady views of Christian duty, holy and unblemished lives, seem to prove them to have been actuated by the purest and most exalted sentiments and desires for the temporal and eternal good of mankind.

Oswald, the royal patron of the pious Aidan, was not inferior to him in his endeavours to promote religion. Many interesting instances might be adduced that he strengthened by his own example his recommendation of those great duties which confer dignity on the lowly, and add lustre to the diadem. Uncorrupt and humble in the midst of prosperity, he evidenced the beauty of holiness. He was the benefactor of the poor and needy, and zealously and cheerfully encouraged every attempt to spread the knowledge and practice of godliness among men. His early education had rather prejudiced him in favour of the same schism which

marked the religious opinions of Aidan, and probably might strengthen the bond of attachment existing between them.

He bestowed upon his esteemed pastor the episcopal see of Lindesfarn, (now called the Holy Island, near Berwick-upon-Tweed.)

One great difficulty attended the ministry of Aidan, he spoke the English language very imperfectly; Oswald, therefore, inspired with a holy and honourable zeal, became his interpreter. Encouraged by his countenance and protection, several other Irish missionaries resorted to the north of England, churches were erected, the gospel was preached, and Northumbria enjoyed the high privilege of spiritual instruction, the advantages of pious example, and the fertilizing streams of christian charity. Even to the year 716, the principles of evangelical piety flourished in the Irish schools amongst the Northumbrians, at which period they were led to conform to the Roman communion.

Oswald had the satisfaction of seeing the blessings of Christianity diffused into Wessex. A spirit so lowly and so charitable must have powerfully felt the beauties of its benign morality, and rejoiced in its increase. But whether we regard the labours and simplicity of the Irish missionaries, or the comparative pomp of the Romish prelates, we see abundant proof of the zeal, integrity and diligence of all. We mark genuine traces of their steps, and observe salutary fruits to arise from the rich seeds which they had assiduously sown. The Irish missionaries Columban and Aidan, the Roman prelates Augustine, Laurentius, Mellitus, Justus, and Paulinus, left wholesome vestiges of their indefatigable labours, which have extended their influence to distant ages. We are told, that in the seventh century, Lauren-

tius, the successor of Augustine in the see of Canterbury, in conjunction with Mellitus, bishop of London, and Justus, bishop of Rochester, endeavoured to reduce the Scots, who inhabited Ireland, to a conformity with the English church; and that John, bishop of Rome, wrote also letters to Ireland against the Pelagian heresy, which was there reviving. The three prelates above-named wrote upon the subject of conformity to the Irish Christians, declaring themselves to be sent by the Roman see to propagate the gospel among the Pagan nations. Laurentius complained of the bigotry of a certain Irish bishop, who, coming to Canterbury, refused to eat at the same table, or even in the same house with him. Thus sadly do differences of opinion weaken the bonds of Christian charity and humility, and swell the human heart with self-conceit and pride. The archbishop and his colleagues could not however prevail either on the Irish or the Britons to enter into the desired conformity, and frequent subsequent attempts were equally unsuccessful.

Egbert, an Englishman, effected this union among many of the Irish in the following century; and as the Romish church grew more corrupt at that period, of course those that conformed to its communion became in proportion more infected with its increasing superstitions.

The power of the Popes had been gradually increasing from the third century. At that period they indeed possessed a marked preeminence in the church, though it was much questioned and regarded with jealousy; it being contended, that it ought to be only that of order and association, not of power and authority. But from the superiority which consisted of convening councils, of presiding in them, and collecting voices, soon arose that consequence attached to certain evidences of

external grandeur and opulence, which render the possessor an object of admiration in the eyes of the world. The bishop of Rome, from simply presiding over his brethren, was led to surpass them in the magnificence of his ceremonies, in the richness of his revenues, in the number and variety of his ministers, and in his splendid manner of living.

These dazzling evidences of human prosperity drew forth the blind admiration of the ignorant, and excited the passions of the ambitious. Hence arose divisions and endless factions : yet still the Papal power was restricted. Bishops did not acknowledge that they derived their authority from the Pope, or were created by favour of the apostolic see. These high prerogatives afterwards possessed, and so arbitrarily used, by the Popes, were obtained by the imprudence or incaution of the emperors in whom the power was vested, by the dexterity of prelates, the inconsiderate zeal, and the precipitate judgment of bishops, by which easy steps were formed for the ascent of despotism. From this proud desire of dominion, endless divisions arose in the eastern and western churches, the fruitful sources of various schisms that became prevalent among those who severally arrogated the titles of defenders of the church, all which were favourable to the growing authority of the Roman pontiff.

For by taking under his protection those prelates whose rights were invaded, he added to the influence and strength of the Roman see, and established its supremacy. The incursions of the barbarians also in the fifth century, were favourable to the augmentation of the papal power, for the monarchs who penetrated into the empire, were naturally solicitous to give stability to their respective governments;

and perceiving the subjection of the multitude to the bishops, and the dependence of the bishops on the pontiffs, they politically concluded their best course was to reconcile the spiritual ruler to their interests, by loading him with honours and benefits. The Gothic kings, however, set bounds to his power in Italy, permitting none to be raised to the pontificate without their approbation, and reserving to themselves the right of judging of the legality of every election. The supreme dominion over the church and its possessions, we have observed, was vested in the emperors and kings both in the east and west. Nor was the consecration of the Roman pontiff of any validity, unless performed in the presence of the emperor's ambassadors. The Roman pontiffs obeyed the laws of the emperors, received their judicial decisions as of indispensable obligation, and executed them with submission. The kings of the Franks appointed extraordinary judges, whom they called envoys, to inspect into the lives and manners of the clergy, to take cognizance of their contests, to terminate their disputes, to enact laws concerning the public worship, and to punish the crimes of the sacred order, as well as those of citizens.

It is to be observed, however, that the Latin emperors did not assume to themselves the administration of the church, or the cognizance and decisions of the controversies that were purely of a religious nature. They acknowledged, on the contrary, that these matters belonged to the tribunal of the pontiff and the ecclesiastical councils. But the jurisdiction of the pontiff was confined within narrow limits; he could decide nothing by his sole authority, but was obliged to convene a council when any religious differences were to be terminated by an authoritative judg-

ment. Nor did the provinces, when any controversy arose, wait for the decision of the pope, but assembled by virtue of their own authority, their particular councils, in which their bishops disclosed their sentiments with perfect freedom on the subjects in debate, frequently voting in direct opposition to what was known to be the opinion of the pontiff.

It is further necessary to observe, that the power of convening councils, and the right of presiding in them, were the prerogatives of the emperors and sovereign princes, in whose dominions those assemblies were held; and that no decree, of any council, obtained the force of law, until it was approved and confirmed by the supreme magistrate. Happy would it have been for the peace of nations and individuals, had the spiritual authority of Rome continued thus wisely bounded by the civil power, but the pontiffs liked not the imperial curb, and left no means untried to break their bonds. They arrogantly claimed a supreme dominion, not only over the church, but also over kings, and aimed to reduce the universe to their spiritual authority. However extravagant these pretensions were, perseverance and favourable circumstances, adroitly managed, finally realized them. It was during this gradual augmentation of papal power, and the divisions and animosities it created, as well as the injury it occasioned to genuine religion, that Burgundy, Germany, and other countries received the instruction of many learned and pious Irishmen, and Europe, with gratitude confessed the superior knowledge, piety, zeal, and purity of the missionaries from the "*Island of Saints*." Gildas, surnamed the Wise, a native of Dumbritton, in Scotland, preached with much success in his own country and in Ireland. In him we perceive the

vigorous plant rising from the seed sown by the gifted Germanus ; as Gildas indirectly obtained his religious knowledge from that great man, having been instructed by Hiltut, who was the immediate pupil or disciple of Germanus. It is pleasing to trace the existing causes of the soul's energies, and the agency which has directed their bias. Dyson also, an Irish monk, taught the gospel in his native land and in France and Germany. His labours were most remarkably crowned with success in the neighbourhood of Mentz, and in regard to the conversion of the northern parts of Europe in the seventh and eighth centuries, the British, Scots, and Irish were the principal instruments in the important work. The erection of many convents for the Scots and Irish, may thus easily be accounted for.

Many persons travelled from Great Britain and Ireland, with the laudable purpose of preaching the gospel to the benighted heathen, and, however superstition might, in modern estimation, tarnish their labours, yet there must have been noble principles in action; to have induced men thus to undergo dangers, difficulties, and privation, without much probability or prospect of advantage or of fame.

Marianus Scotus, speaking of the seventh century, says, Ireland was filled with saints. Their schools were renowned for ages. Many divisions arose, but while such men as Paulinus and Aidan lived, the diversity of sentiment produced no great mischief. It was in the seventh century that Alfred, king of Northumbria, the worthy precursor of his great namesake, devoted himself to piety and literature, and rejected from the throne of his father by a faction of the great, voluntarily retired into Ireland, that he might pursue his unambitious studies. For fifteen years, he enjoyed

a life of philosophic tranquillity and progressive improvement. The books revered by Christians, engrossed so much of his study, that one of the epithets applied to him was, "most learned in the scriptures." It may be interesting to add, that this monarch continued to exhibit to the world this example of contented privacy till called to the throne, and that he governed with the same virtue that had marked his retirement, deriving his happiness from the peace and enjoyments of his people. Northumbria was blessed with his superintendence for nineteen years.—(See Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons.)

But to return from the digression, which we have committed to illustrate the estimation of Irish instruction.

As depravity increased, and the spirit of faith and love grew colder, hurtful disputes arose, to the scandal of the gospel. The Roman church, however, acquired more and more influence, though it was very far from pervading the whole of the British isles at the end of the century. Let it suffice, that our ancestors saw in this century a blessed time, the fruits of which will abide for ever.

Columban, an Irish monk, distinguished from him of the same name before alluded to, (who was called the Ancient,) towards the close of the sixth century had extirpated the remains of the expiring paganism in France. He also passed the Rhine, and evangelized several German states. In fortitude, constancy, and unwearied labour, he was inferior to none of the missionaries of the age. Columban was an author as well as missionary. He wrote on monastic rules, and his sentiments, as well as the tenour of his life, were pious and devout. Although, as may be expected, he was infected with the servile genius of the

times, and the spirit of superstition, which had then pervaded the church, one sentence remarkably proves the evangelical purity of his doctrine; "We must have recourse to Christ, the fountain of life." Killian was also an Irish missionary, he received a commission from the apostolic see to preach to the infidels, and with some disciples he resorted to Wurtzburg, on the Mayne, the governor of which place was a pagan. He received the gospel and was baptized, and many followed his example. This governor had married his brother's wife, and it is a proof that Killian blended discretion with his zeal, that he deferred any marked admonition on this head, till he had established his convert pretty firmly in his faith; convinced that a deep and sincere reception of it, and a conviction of crime could not coexist. Killian at length ventured to act the part of John the Baptist, and the event was very similar. Gosbert promised to obey his monitions, and appeared deeply sensible of his moral turpitude; but he *delayed* the sacrifice of his inclinations to his religious duty, till his return from a projected expedition. Delays of duty are always perilous, the mischief of procrastination against the light of conscience, was never more strikingly illustrated. In his absence, Guiland, the incestuous wife of Gosbert, and the German Herodias, procured the murder of the faithful Killian and his holy companions. They were all engaged in devotional exercise, when thus made a sacrifice to the revenge of a wicked woman, and died with the patience of martyrs, in the year 688. Gosbert weakly yielded to suffer the murderers to escape with impunity.

While religion and learning increased in Hibernia during the fifth and sixth centuries, the doctrine of the gospel had been declining in Great

Britain. In a discourse of Gildas yet extant, he addresses with honest vehemence and much spirit, the clergy of Britain, rebuking them for their avarice, ambition, and simony. This declension and decay in the religion of the Britons were produced by many concurring causes, the principal of which was, perhaps, the invasion of the Saxons, who were altogether idolaters.

A few faint gleams of true religion, indeed, remained in the extremities of the kingdom, but in the heart of the island, the invaders had obscured the rays that had beamed, and Christianity though retaining a few of its forms, possessed neither spirit nor life, and the ministers of it were either fearful or inattentive to the propagation of their tenets in the island, while the Saxons, continued for the most part, immersed in darkness. To those who know how necessary it is, day by day, to refresh and invigorate the principles of the soul by diligent exercise, who know the tendency of the human mind to retrogression, and to fall back through indolence, to the low standard, above which it may have been elevated, this degenerated state of religion during the period we have alluded to, will not be surprising. When we also reflect upon the general spirit of the times, restless, warring, greedy of conquest, our reason will at once pronounce, that the mild spirit of Christianity must have evaporated in the baleful atmosphere. Nothing can more forcibly exemplify the low ebb of Christian zeal among the professors, than the fact that no attempt is recorded to have been made to convert the Saxons. Congall, indeed, an Irish monk, is said to have persuaded a number of persons in Britain, to embrace a monastic life, under a rule of discipline, of which he was the founder. But during the seventh century, she emerged from the clouds

which had obscured her religious hemisphere, and providence peculiarly blessed many instruments employed to propagate the glad tidings of salvation. We have already remarked upon the success of Aidan and others, and we have no reason to doubt that pastors, both of the Roman and British communion, laboured in the important work with simplicity and integrity.

Towards the close of the century, zeal grew more faint, and religion suffered from worldly contention and uncharitable divisions; the subtle spirit of selfish ambition easily insinuates itself into the human heart, and corrupts human actions.

Were it relevant to our subject, it would be interesting to trace the fluctuations of religious opinion during the vicissitudes of the Anglo-Saxon octarchy, presenting to our contemplation a succession of great individuals, each distinguished by some peculiar characteristic traits worthy their high station; and the result of which was, that the Anglo-Saxons, though fluctuating in the prosperity of their several districts, yet, considered as a nation, rapidly advanced in civilization and power.

CHAPTER III.

General State of Christian Religion in Europe—Romish Faith increases—The Irish brought over to Roman Observation of Easter—Ireland distinguished as a prime Seat of Learning—Success of Irish Missionaries—Rumold—Virgilius—Human Reasoning displaces simple Faith—Image Worship—Funereal Rites—Temporal Power of the Popes—Gloom of Superstition increases—Accession of Papal Power—Study of Philosophy prevails—Johannes Grigona, his great Talent and Favour with Charlemagne and Alfred—Devotional Spirit prevails in the British Isles—Monastic Institutions increase, and Numbers dedicate themselves to the Cloister—Superstition increases greatly—While a secular Spirit arises among the religious Orders—Reverence paid to Religion and Learning among the Irish—Ireland is invaded by the Barbarians, is plunged in consequence into Disorder and Ignorance—Indulgence of the first Missionaries injudicious, and productive of Mischief to true Religion—Civil Polity of Ireland effected by Christianity in some Degree—Low Standard of Morals—Mischief and Advantages of Monastic Seclusion—State of the Clergy, in regard to Morals and Discipline—Their Riches and Power continue to increase, and they are encouraged by Princes to become Statesmen and Courtiers—The Policy of the Papal Court—Terrors of Excommunication—Causes of the Depravity of the sacerdotal Orders—Ireland invaded by the Danes—Their Success, the Want of Plan and Unanimity among the Irish Septs favourable to the Invaders—Pontifical Power continues to augment—This restless and ambitious Spirit resisted by some Kings and Princes—Their Inconsistency negatives their Efforts—Great Ignorance prevails—The Exceptions—Art and Science revive: in a Degree to be attributed to the Norman Conquest—Some Effects of the Reception of Christianity among the Normans—Invasion of Ireland by Magnus—His Defeat and Death—Ireland decreed to become a Conquest—Internal Discord favours the Success—Ambitious Views of the Papacy.

EIGHTH CENTURY.

THE religion of the eighth century, historical truth obliges us to say, consisted greatly in a motley round of external rites and ceremonies. We are not, therefore, to be surprised that more

zeal and diligence were employed in multiplying and regulating the exterior of a superstitious devotion, than in converting the hearts, correcting the passions, regulating the wills, and enlightening the understandings of men; and that a variety of senseless ceremonies disfigured the beautiful simplicity of the Christian institutions, particularly the eucharistic part of them. As a proof of the increasing influence of the Romish faith, we have already related, that at an early period of this century, or rather at the close of the preceding, the Irish were brought over to the Roman mode of celebrating Easter; hitherto the Christians of Ireland and Britain are believed to have served their Creator with greater sincerity and purity than other nations which had been evangelized; that is, more closely accordant to apostolic simplicity.

Ireland was peculiarly distinguished as a prime seat of learning in this century. Several Irish laboured in the Christian vineyard, and during the time of Charlemagne, were received at his court, and consecrated bishops in Germany and France. They taught both sacred and profane learning with reputation and success. The labours and industry of the divines of this age were principally employed in collecting the opinions and authorities of the fathers, by whom are meant the theological writers of the first six centuries of the Christian era. To these, rather than to the pure Fountain-head of their faith, they resorted to guide their practice, to form their opinions, and to exercise their understandings; no wonder therefore they were "in endless mazes lost;" for, as has been most justly observed, amongst all the diversities of opinions and modes of Christianity, from what quarter shall the sincere Christian receive that solid satisfaction and wise

direction, which such multifarious systems are not adapted to administer?

These he will receive, and can only receive by turning his dazzled view and bewildered imagination from the secret decrees of God, which were neither designed to be *rules* of action nor sources of comfort to mortals here below, and by fixing his mental vision upon the mercy of the Creator, as manifested through the mercy of the Redeemer, the pure laws and sublime promises of the Gospel, the righteousness of the divine government, there revealed, and the awful justice of his future tribunal.

When we attempt by our reason to interpret the Scriptures, we must involve ourselves in difficulties and error; for we must all, at one time or other of our lives, have experienced the fact, that we view things according to our various dispositions and cast of opinion; this or that interpretation pleases us and appears indisputable, because perhaps it suits our existing feelings, and captivates the dominant passion, and our nature is ever prone to conform our sentiments to the prejudices of our own minds.

We cannot suppose the divines, of the period of which we now speak, were exempt from these weaknesses and prejudices of humanity, hence their blind and servile veneration for those primitive doctors, eminent as they were, for wisdom and piety was most unquestionably unfavourable to genuine religion, and had a decided tendency to exalt the pride of human reasoning above the pure and simple doctrines of the gospel, for the dictates of the fathers were considered infallible, and their writings as the boundaries of truth, beyond which reason was hardly permitted to push its researches, although the scriptures were allowed to be summoned to its bar; and men, not

content with acknowledging that the Holy Spirit is the true and original author of all that is good in the affections of the heart, and in the actions which emanate from it, scrupled not to dispute about the *manner* in which it operates upon the mind of man.

The Irish or Hibernians, who, in this century, were known by the name of Scots, are remarkably distinguished as the only divines who refused to prostrate their reason by submitting it implicitly to the dictates of authority; but naturally subtle and sagacious, they dared to apply their philosophy, such as it was, to the illustration of the truths and doctrines of religion; a method which was almost generally contemned and exploded in other nations. That the Hibernians were lovers of learning, and distinguished themselves in those times of ignorance by the culture of the sciences, beyond all the other European nations; travelling through the most distant lands, both with a view to individual improvement and to communicate their knowledge, is ascertained by undoubted facts, well authenticated by history; in the interesting details of which we behold them discharging, with the highest reputation and applause, the functions of doctors, in France, Germany, and Italy, both during the eighth and ninth centuries. Benedict, abbot of Aniane, in the province of Languedoc, who lived in this period, testifies (says Mosheim) that Hibernians were the first teachers of the scholastic theology in Europe, illustrating the doctrines of religion by the principles of philosophy; and that so early as the eighth century, Benedict, while he pays a tribute of just praise to the learning and zeal of the Hibernians, gives some examples of their subtlety, which he greatly and justly condemns; severely animadverting upon its introduction into

theology, as tending to error and pride, wisely recommending in its place that amiable simplicity and plainness which is alone conformable to the nature and genius of the gospel. In this century, Rumold, an Irishman, laboured in the service of religion. He travelled into Lower Germany, also into Brabant, diffused much light in the neighbourhood of Mechlin, and was constituted an itinerant episcopal missionary. He was finally murdered by two persons, one of whom, with the fidelity of his sacred profession, he had reproved for adultery.

Virgilius, also an Irishman, was appointed, in 780, bishop of Saltzburg, by king Pepin. His modesty prevented his entering upon his sacred office for two years; but he at length consented to the consecration. A misunderstanding once took place between Virgilius and the famous Boniface. The latter accused him to the see of Rome, of teaching "that there was another world, and other men under the earth, or another sun and moon." To the pious and ardent spirit of Boniface, a difficulty of solving the great question arose on this view of the tenets of Virgilius; how such ideas were compatible with the Mosaic account of the origin of all mankind from Adam, and of the redemption of the whole species by Jesus Christ. After all it appears that Boniface was mistaken, and that Virgilius being better acquainted with the true figure of the terraqueous globe, than most of his contemporaries, only held the opinion of the antipodes, a notion as sound in philosophy as innocent in theology. As Virgilius was subsequently consecrated bishop, he continued to labour in the same cause as the zealous Boniface, and to tread in his steps. It is therefore reasonable to conclude, that both Boniface and the Pope were satisfied with the soundness of his

faith, and accordingly dismissed the accusation against him.

One of the mischievous and fatal consequences of that mental departure from the simple reliance on the Redeemer, which was the beautiful and distinguishing principle of the primitive Christians, to that proud glorying in the strength of human reasoning, of which we have spoken, was the dispute respecting image-worship, which arose in this century, and very, very long agitated the church in every part. The knowledge of the gospel had become too generally adulterated, and the faith of men in the Redeemer losing its stability, they had recourse to vain refuges for the relief of accusing conscience, "and the mind," says Milner, "no longer under the influence of the Holy Spirit, betook itself to the arts of sculpture and painting, in order to inflame its affections and to kindle a false fire of devotion. Nothing can more strongly prove the neglect of the scriptures, than the progress of this idolatrous practice, as they so decidedly condemn it. It is, however, quite unnecessary to dwell upon the subject here, or to detail the various evasions and sophistical arguments, with which the advocates for image-worship justified their opinions and practice.

We shall merely add, that Gregory the Second, who then filled the papal chair, was an open defender of the superstition; and, as it forms a distinguishing feature in the Romish religion to the present day, we may regard him as the advocate, the first *real Pope* of Rome. Many superstitions and abuses, in the discipline of the church, had been gradually arising; one is worthy of observation, as marking the decline of purity of doctrine. We allude to the practice of

interring the dead in the churchyards, a custom to be dated from the beginning of this century.

The dead had previously been buried near the highways, according to the Roman laws, and Christian congregations had followed the practice, at least they had burial places remote from the cities.

But during the pontificate of Gregory, the priests and monks began to offer prayers for the deceased, and received gifts from the relations for the performance of those services. On this account, the ecclesiastics requested permission of Gregory that the deceased might be interred near the places of the monks' abode, or in the churches or monasteries, in order that the relatives might have a better opportunity of uniting in the funeral devotions. To this practice, so congenial to the feeling of sorrow, and the dictates of affection, we may trace the doctrine of purgatory, or rather its progress, as well as the avaricious advantage taken of it, and the departure from the purity of the church. "While men rested in the Redeemer," says a pious author, "and dared to behold themselves complete in him, they had no temptation to apply to false refuges of prayers for the deceased. In the article of death, they committed their souls and bodies to their Saviour. That hope of glory being obscured or lost, they struggled in vain through life with doubts and fears, and departing in uncertainty, left to the charity of friends to supply their supposed deficiency of merit, and found no end, in wandering mazes lost." *

* Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, introduced the custom into England in 750. The reasons on which the doctrine of purgatory is justified by Papacy are:—"Some part of the debt, which the penitent owes to divine justice,

It was during this century that the Popes acquired temporal as well as spiritual dominion; assuming not only infallibility in the latter, but interfering in all secular affairs with ambitious intrigue.

may remain uncanceled. Certainly some sins are venial, and deserve not eternal death; yet, if not effaced by condign penance in this world, they must be punished in the next. The smallest sin excludes a soul from heaven, so long as it is not blotted out. But no man will say that a venial sin, which destroys not sanctifying grace, will be punished with eternal torments. Hence there must be a relaxation of some sin in the world to come. Venial sins of surprise are readily effaced by penance, as we hope, through divine mercy. Venial sins of malice, or those committed with full deliberation, are of a different nature, far more grievous and fatal. They are usually sins of habit, and lead even to mortal sin." Thus by the help of certain distinctions of sins, conclusions are drawn no where warranted in scripture, and mankind were led to regard purgatory as a relief to a troubled conscience. If they had not effaced their guilt by penance in this life, it was hoped that purgatory, assisted by the prayers and donations in behalf of the deceased, would release them afterwards from damnation. How strongly men were hence encouraged to live in sin all their days, is too apparent.

"The doctrine of purgatory," says an agreeable modern writer, "is very easily, nay, consistently embraced by such as believe in the expiatory nature of pain and suffering. The best feelings of our hearts are, besides, most ready to assist the imagination in devising means to keep up an intercourse with the invisible world, which either possesses already, or must soon possess, whatever has engaged our affection in this. Grief for a departed friend loses half its bitterness with a Catholic, who can firmly believe, that not a day shall pass without repeated and effectual proofs of attachment on his part, till he join the conscious object of his love in bliss. While other articles of the Catholic faith are too refined and abstracted for youth, the tender and benevolent juvenile mind easily seizes on the idea of purgatory fire. A parent or a brother, still kind to them in another world, yet suffering excruciating pains, that may be relieved, shortened, or perhaps terminated, by some privation or prayer, are notions perfectly adapted to youthful capacity and feelings:" and, it may be added, is one of the most powerful engines to move the sensibilities and draw forth sacrifices by human beings.

The churches, both of the east and west, were deformed with false worship, and those parts which had not yet sunk into the prevailing idolatry were prepared for the gradual admission of it, partly by the increase of superstition and partly by the servile submission of the European churches to the domination of the Roman see.

As we enter the ninth century, we appear to be more and more involved in the form of superstition; for, unlike institutions of human science, which improve and become clearer by time, Christian principles are seen in their greatest perfection on their first display; for, derived immediately from the simple divine word, and impressed on the hearts of men by the divine grace, pure and unmingled, they appear in full freshness and vigour. Too soon, however, the boasted wisdom of the world, aided by the inherent propensities of a fallen nature, corrupts and deteriorates them; too often leaving them divested of their radiance and despoiled of their purity. The exciting causes of the declension of true religion, which marked this age, were the preference which was given to human writings above the study of the scriptures—the increasing domination of the Papacy—the vast accumulation of external ceremonies, and the attention given to the decrees of men rather than the oracles of God. The Roman pontiffs gained great accession of power from the contending interests of ambitious princes. Charles the Bald, having obtained the imperial dignity by the good offices of the Pope, returned this eminent service by delivering the succeeding pontiffs from the obligation of waiting for the consent of the emperors, in order to their being installed into their office, and thus the election of the bishop of Rome was thenceforth carried on with little regard to law and propriety, being generally at-

tended with much tumult, until the reign of Otho the Gréat, who exercised his authority to arrest these disgraceful and disorderly proceedings.

The power and influence of the pontiffs, however, in civil affairs, arose in a short time to an enormous height, through the favour and protection of the princes, in whose cause they had employed their influence over the minds of the people. The increase of their authority was not less rapid or less considerable in spiritual matters, as it arose from the same causes. The European princes suffered themselves to be divested of the supreme authority in religious matters, which they had enjoyed: the power of the bishops declined, and even the authority of councils, both general and provincial, began to be disregarded.

The pontiffs, elated with this prosperity, became extremely arrogant, and their claims rose in proportion to their success. They were earnest in persuading all, and did succeed in persuading numbers, that the bishop of Rome was appointed and constituted by Jesus Christ supreme legislator and judge of the church universal, and therefore that the bishops derived all their authority from the Roman pontiff, nor could the councils determine any thing without his permission and consent. Notwithstanding these opinions, inculcated with zeal and ardour by the pontiffs, were opposed by such as were acquainted with the ancient ecclesiastical constitution and the government of the church in early ages, they were finally admitted.

Thus the church of Rome played a successful game, in the chances of which she had long been engaged, and to effect this auspicious termination she summoned all her forces of intrigue and insinuation. Having at length proclaimed

the necessity of an abstract creed for salvation, and made herself the infallible framer and expounder of that creed, she left her votaries no alternative of receiving or rejecting her doctrines, and as she suppressed in the bud every attempt to inform the understandings of men, she established her power upon ignorance, thus depriving her votaries of the power, had they possessed the inclination, to trace the sources of her doctrines, or to examine her theological system.

But, although vital Christian knowledge, and its beautiful fruit practical piety, shone feebly indeed in this dark season, learning, which had little connexion with the heart, or the great truths of religion, was not unknown or disregarded. The philosophy and logic that were taught in the European schools during this century, scarcely indeed deserved those honourable titles; yet there were to be found, especially among the Irish, men of acute perceptions and extensive knowledge, who were perfectly well entitled to the appellation of philosophers. The chief of these was Iohannes Scotius Erigena, a native of Ireland, as his name imports. He was the friend and companion of Charles the Bald, who delighted so much in his conversation, as to honour him with a place at his table. Scotius was endowed with an excellent, and truly superior genius, and was considerably versed both in Greek and Latin erudition. He explained to his disciples the doctrines of Aristotle, for which he was singularly well qualified by his perfect knowledge of the Greek; but, as his genius was too bold and aspiring to confine itself to the authority and decisions of the Stagirite, he pushed his philosophical researches yet further, dared to think for himself, and ventured to pursue truth by the efforts of his own reason, the

result of which is contained in several works yet extant. This celebrated philosopher* formed no particular sect, at least it is not known that he did; and this will be considered by those who reflect on the spirit of the times in which he lived, as a fair proof that his immense learning was accompanied with meekness and modesty, a circumstance as rare as it is admirable. In one recorded instance, he opposed the powers of his mighty mind to the absurd tenet of transubstantiation, introduced during his time by an ecclesiastic named Pascasius Radbert; but however successfully Scotius and his colleague Rabanus, Bishop of Mentz, might plead the cause of common sense in this controversy, it would appear they were lamentably deficient in the one true knowledge, as they united in opposing the doctrine of grace, concerning which a controversy was raised in this century.

In the British Isles, it is pleasing to be authorised by history to say, that a devotional spirit prevailed. Monks in Ireland and Scotland, who gave themselves to prayer, preaching, and teaching, in the middle ages, were called Culdees, that is, cultores Dei. They were first known in this century by that name at St. Andrew's particularly, but had no settlement in England except at St. Peter's, York. During this century also, monastic institutions greatly multiplied, and were held in the highest repute: kings, princes, nobles, abandoned their thrones, and shut themselves up in monasteries, devoting themselves to God. And,

* Erigena was a companion of our Alfred, admired for the acumen of his intellect, and the expansion of his knowledge. He was in high favour with Charlemagne, who delighted

in his ready wit and vast mental resources. He was munificently rewarded by Alfred, and died by violence at Malmesbury.

if the allurements of the world opposed their separation from society during their lives, such was the absurd and blind superstition that spread itself over the minds of men, that when death approached, they were accustomed to demand the monastic habit, and actually assumed it before their departure, that they might be regarded as one of the fraternity, and be in consequence entitled to the fervent prayers and other spiritual succours of their brethren. So deeply will fallible man sink in mental weakness and debasement, when he loses his hold of that anchor which is fixed to support him buoyant above error. But nothing affords a stronger instance of the veneration in which these recluses were held, than that princes drew numbers of them from their retired cloisters, and placed them in situations entirely foreign to their vows and their habits, and even in general, of their characters; placing them even at the head of state affairs, and amidst the splendour of courts.

Hence we find in the history of those, and subsequent times, frequent examples of monks and abbots performing the functions of envoys, ambassadors, and ministers of state; and displaying their secular talents with various success in those eminent and important stations, and hence it was that worldly ambition too often usurped the place of that humility which should mark the temper, and adorn the conduct of spiritual guides.

During the three centuries, of which we have thus taken a rapid glance, we are informed, that among the Irish, great reverence was paid to religion and learning; but its insular and exposed situation, leaving the country a prey to the devastating incursions of the northern barbarians, the attendant calamities, combined with intestine commotions, banished learning from its shores,

and sunk it into all the miseries of foreign invasions and civil wars, in which dreadful state of disorder and barbarity it continued during a long series of years.

The first Christian missionaries to Ireland, avoided with a caution, the judiciousness of which may be questioned, any violence to the ancient religious manners and customs of the ignorant people they desired to convert. Had this temporising spirit extended no further than favouring and protecting the bards and poets, and forbearing to persecute the feeble remnant of the druidical order, it would have been laudable, and no ill consequences might have resulted from the indulgent system—but, by overlooking a variety of Pagan rites, feasts, and ceremonies, in the spirit of this indulgence, the license encouraged their incorporation with the professed Christian faith, and they thus extended rather than contracted the empire of fanaticism, and effectually prepared the people for the reception of the gross superstitions of the Romish church. Many of those Pagan ceremonies remain in practice to this day; for instance, fires are lighted up at particular times, and the ignorant peasantry drive their cattle through these fires, in the firm belief that it is an effectual means to preserve them from all future accidents.*

* This is evidently derived from the worship of Bel or Baal. There is a curious custom which prevailed in the Highlands, (but is now yielding to the diffusion of knowledge,) resembling this we have named as practised in Ireland, and certainly derived from the same source. “Upon the first day of May, which is called

Beltan or Belstien day, (allusive to the sun,) all the boys in a township or hamlet meet on the moors. They cut a table in the green sod, of a circular figure, by casting a trench in the ground of such circumference as to hold the whole company. They then kindle a fire, and dress a repast of eggs and milk, to the consist-

It will be sufficiently evident, that while such absurd ceremonies were connived at, and perhaps encouraged, (for this was but one of many

ence of a custard. Having done this, they knead a cake of oatmeal, which is baked in the embers against a stone. After having eaten the custard, they divide the cake into so many portions, as similar as possible in size and shape, as there are persons assembled.

One portion they daub over with charcoal until perfectly black; they then put them in a bonnet, and every one blindfold, takes out a piece: he who holds the bonnet is entitled to the last piece. Whoever draws the blackened portion, is the devoted person who is to be sacrificed to Baal, whose favour they mean to implore, in rendering the year productive of the sustenance of man and beast. There is little doubt of these inhuman sacrifices having been once offered in the countries of Ireland, Scotland, and Britain, as well as in the East; although they now pass from the act of sacrificing, and only compel the devoted person to leap three times through the flames, with which the ceremony of the festival is closed." — *Jameson's Dictionary of the Scottish Language*.

An account of another author respecting the observance of this superstitious ceremony differs in some degree from the above. "They cut a square trench in the ground," he re-

lates, "leaving a turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal, and milk, and bring besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whiskey; for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin by spilling some of the caudle on the ground by way of libation; on that, every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them. Each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and flinging it over his shoulder, says, 'This I give to thee; preserve thou my horses—this to thee, preserve thou my sheep;' and so on. After that, they use the same ceremony to the noxious animal. 'This I give to thee, O fox! spare thou my lambs—this to thee, O hooded crow!—this to thee, O eagle!' When the ceremony is over, they regale on the caudle, and after the feast is concluded, what is left is hid by two persons deputed for that purpose; but on the next Sunday, they re-assemble, and consume the relics of the entertainment." — *Pennant's Tour*.

of a similar nature,) it did not avail much to denounce the divine vengeance on those who dared to worship the sun, moon, and winds.

The early Irish missionaries, however, notwithstanding these injudicious indulgences to the superstitious practices of their converts, seem to have been sincerely zealous in their holy cause, and so absorbed in that great concern, that no secular views occupied their attention: the civil polity of the Irish therefore underwent no alteration for a considerable period after the first introduction of the Christian faith. But as the interests of the church must at all times be necessarily interwoven with the best interests of the state, so it was of course found that the civil establishment of Ireland must in several points be accommodated to the growing improvements of the received Christian faith.

“Accordingly we are told,” says Leland, “that St. Patrick was one of nine persons, kings, bards, and ecclesiastics, appointed to revise the ordinances of Pagan times, and to form a new code of laws; and that this code was formed, published, and known to posterity under the title of *Scandias Moir*, or the great antiquity.”

It forms no part of the plan of this work to enter into the detail of these and other ancient Irish laws. It will suffice to say, that they not only provide against those crimes usually cognizable by human tribunals, but also against those which are too generally committed with impunity even in civilised nations. The most criminal offences were, however, only punishable by fine, termed *eric*. A person being expelled, or otherwise quitting one tribe, could not enter another unless he had paid *eric* for all offences committed in his former residence.

The fine paid to a son for the murder of his father, was rated at seven *cumhals*, as they were

termed, or twenty-one kine. Hence we may form a judgment of the lenity of their penal laws in other instances. Property was guarded by many minute institutions, breathing equity and humanity; and historians agree in awarding to the Irish the honourable praise of being lovers of justice. In some fragments of their laws, singular clauses are found, regulating the prices of dress for all orders and ranks, a proof that it was considered a very important subject, both as affecting the interest and morals of the community.

These laws ordain that wives who bring no dowry, (including even queens,) shall be restrained in the expence of their apparel: they ascertain the prices also of needle-work, embroidery, and other ornaments of dress. Hospitality is generally a very prominent virtue of a rude people. The ancient Irish were peculiarly distinguished for it; and their laws expressly enjoin its observance, enacting that no rath, (the term for the dwelling-house and offices, where an individual resided with his dependants,) should break up suddenly, lest the traveller, whatever his condition or rank, should be disappointed of his expected reception and refreshment. Even the lowest of the people claimed this reception and refreshment by an almost perfect right; and so interwoven was the custom with the habits of the people, that centuries have not effaced it: even now, the wandering beggar enters the house of a farmer or gentleman with the ease and freedom of a constant inmate, and an entire consciousness of the validity of his claim. The benign spirit of Christianity favoured and inculcated this virtue of hospitality, and the clergy enforced and countenanced the prevailing custom. "The most holy men of heaven," say the Irish laws, "were remarkable for hospitality; and the gospel com-

mands us to receive the sojourner, to entertain him, and relieve his wants."

In thus taking a cursory view of the manners of the Irish, it is necessary to observe, that although considerably raised above barbarity by the introduction of a civilising faith, they yet remained a rude people during several centuries; notwithstanding, there were many individuals who adorned their native society by their talent, learning, and piety. It also clearly appears, that although rights were accurately defined in their societies, and the people were generally impressed with an habitual love of justice, and a desire to act upon its obligations; yet their passions being extremely irritable, and their sense of injuries lively, they were led precipitately to recur to brute force for redress, and hence there was but little that could truly be called a peaceable connexion between the different inhabitants of the country, although it most certainly possessed very many opportunities and facilities of self improvement.

From these circumstances we are led to infer, that the change of principles and sentiments which is the natural effect of a sincere reception of the gospel, was very slow in advance, and feeble in degree, among the Irish; for there is every reason to believe, there was perfect sincerity in the preaching, and a constancy of zeal in the missionaries and ministers of the introduced religion; and that these advantages were not more evidently improved, must be attributed to the counteracting spirit of the times, and the imperfections of the government of the island, which powerfully existed, and kept in pernicious action the violent and irascible passions, so directly opposed to the mild and peaceable spirit of Christianity.

The influence of the Irish monarchs was weak and fluctuating; their power was often controlled,

contemned, and resisted. The provinces, and even the inferior septs into which the island was divided, lived in a species of federal union with each other, which the pride, the ambition, avarice or revenge, of the several chieftains was ever ready to interrupt. Their histories are replete with records of the fatal effects of these dangerous and malignant passions, which throw a deep shade over those fairer portions of the moral pictures displayed of the equity, rectitude, benevolence, and generosity of the ancient Irish. But, while we are thus painfully obliged to speak of the low standard of general morals, we must still remember, that of Ireland was not lower, nor indeed so low as that of other nations of Europe, during what are termed the middle ages; that is, the period comprehending the interval between the fifth and the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. It was a period of ignorance and abject superstition; neither arts, learning, nor laws, were valued or understood, and consequently there was neither motive nor stimulus to cultivate them, even by the few who shone like dim stars in a cloudy hemisphere.

It was during this general degeneracy, that monastic institutions took their rise, and though the immorality which soon disgraced those who established them, renders it impossible for the faithful historian to exempt them from the general censure; yet certainly, within their recesses was buried many a gifted genius, and many an exalted mind, whose influence in *active* life would have given a higher tone to public manners, by erecting a higher standard of virtuous example. But, it was the genius of Popery, and the spirit of the times, which led so many to sequester themselves from the duties of active life, and wilfully to destroy their social utility. Yet it would be unjust

to pass a general and severe censure on these monastic retreats, or to regard them only as the receptacles of indolence and superstition, as in the zeal of reform they were considered. We must in justice remember, that during some of the middle ages, the monks were the depositaries, of whatever piety, or learning, or humanity there remained in Christendom; that amidst all their superstitious practices, the spirit of true devotion was not totally extinct, that they were the chief instructors of youth, the almost sole historians of their times. That as landed proprietors, they were indulgent and easy to their tenants; and that their hospitality was boundless and extensive. In short, that the virtues compatible with their vows, were by many exercised in an exemplary manner. "It appears but just," says a periodical writer, speaking of the severe censures indiscriminately laid upon monastic houses and their inmates, "that while we lament the ignorance, and detest the vices which prevailed among this great body of men, we do not totally forget that there were very many among them, who possessed much virtue and much learning; and while we yield to the popular zeal, which has blackened their character, let us remember, we of the present day, owe them much. That they were the promoters of science, and the preservers of all that is valuable to us in literature, their remains abundantly testify. Utter ignorance, neglect, and insensibility, could not have been universal among men, who preserved through many dark ages of the deepest barbarity, the remains of Augustan learning and Attic elegance; who have bequeathed to us many models of architecture, which in their design and execution are, by more refined ages yet unrivalled; who have illuminated their beautiful missals with colours, which the

apparently perfected science of chymistry has not been able to equal; who were the inventors of many of the most useful and valuable arts, tending to the advancement and adornment of society; and finally, whose remains of metallic works, painting, and sculpture, are yet the admiration of the enlightened and cultivated genius. Indulgence has always been shown to the faults and errors of an individual, when he has been acknowledged to have been a public benefactor. If this principle be a just one, some tenderness is surely due to the memory of men to whom we owe not only the elegancies of literature, and acquisitions in science, but the more permanent and more valuable blessings derived from the knowledge of Christianity."

Many were the causes which contributed to the prosperity, and to its much to be lamented consequence, the arrogance of the sacerdotal order during the period we now are describing; during which, the clergy sadly departed from their spiritual duties, or mingled them with secular dispositions, and even military engagements. Yet, although thus disgracing their profession, instead of displaying to the world the attractions of virtuous example, they were still regarded almost as deities, and held in the highest veneration by the submissive multitude; nothing can more forcibly prove the insinuating power they possessed. Their riches and privileges of course continued to increase; excessive donations, not only of private possessions, but public grants, made to the clergy with extravagant liberality, augmented unceasingly the treasures of the European churches, which increased to a great height during the eighth and ninth centuries, according with the system of policy prevalent at that period. Kings employed either in usurpation or defence, endeavoured to attach those who could assist them; and accordingly

bought them over to aid their interests, by donatives, territories, privileges, &c. Hence it became an axiom of political prudence with sovereigns, to distribute among the bishops and others of the clergy, the same sort of donations that had, under a different spirit of the times, been made to generals, &c. ; nor is it to be inferred, that religion, or superstition rather, was always the principle which drew forth liberality: they expected perhaps, more fidelity and loyalty from men bound by the obligations of religion, and consecrated to the service of God, than from a body of nobility ; at least, they knew the influence they held over the actions of the latter. It is probable, from the consciousness of this influence, they hoped to check the turbulent spirit of their vassals, and to maintain them in obedience by the authority of their spiritual guides, whose commands were reverently respected, and whose denunciations rendered formidable by ignorance, struck terror into the boldest and most resolute hearts. Thus the excessive augmentation of sacerdotal opulence and authority, regarded upon a superficial view, as the effect of superstition alone, was in very many instances certainly, the result of great political sagacity and prudence, of which unnumbered proofs might be given, if necessary to establish the fact.

The terrors of excommunication* so truly formi-

* Excommunication was lodged in the hands of the clergy, and was distinguished into greater and lesser. The lesser simply called *aphorismos*, "separation, or suspension," consisted in excluding men from the participation of the eucharist, and the prayers of the faithful: but they were not expelled the church, for they

had the privilege of being present at the reading of the Scriptures, the sermons, and the prayers of the catechumens and penitents. This excommunication was inflicted for lesser crimes, misbehaviour, or neglecting to attend the service of the church, &c.

The greater excommunication called *pantiles aphorismos*

dable and hideous, acquired at this period, if possible, new accessions of terror in Europe. Excommunicated persons were indeed considered in all places as objects of aversion to God and man, but they were not on that account robbed of their privileges as citizens, nor of the rights of humanity,

rismos, "total separation and anathema" consisted in an absolute and entire exclusion from the church, and the participation of all its rites. When any person was thus excommunicated, notice was given of it by circular letters to the most eminent churches all over Christendom, that they might all confirm this act of discipline, by refusing to admit the delinquent to their communion. The consequences of this excommunication were very terrible; the excommunicated person was avoided in civil commerce, and outward conversation. No one was to receive him into his house, nor eat at the same table with him, and when dead he was denied the solemn rites of burial.

The Roman pontifical takes notice of three kinds of excommunication: 1st. The minor, incurred by those who have any correspondence with an excommunicated person. 2dly. The major, which falls upon those who disobey the commands of the holy see, or refuse to submit to certain points of discipline, in consequence of which they are excluded from the church militant and triumphant, and delivered over to the devil and

his angels. 3dly. Anathema, which is properly that pronounced by the pope against heretical princes and countries. In former ages the papal fulminations were most terrible things. The form abounds in dreadful imprecations. It is evident that this assumed power was a terrible engine of oppression and cruelty. This unnatural empire over the mind of men owes its origin to pagan customs. Upon the conversion of barbarous nations to Christianity, the new and ignorant proselytes confounded the excommunication used among Christians with that which had been practised by the priests of their gods, and considered it of the same nature and effects. This opinion was favoured by the injudicious indulgence of missionaries, in suffering them to retain many of their pagan institutions.

The Roman pontiffs on the other side were sufficiently artful to encourage error, so calculated to gratify their ambition, to aggrandize the episcopal order in general, and to ensure to them the influence of fear over the mental energies of the people.

much less were those kings and princes whom the head of the church thought proper to exclude from its communion, supposed to forfeit on that account their crown or their territories.

But from the eighth century it was different in Europe, excommunication received that hideous power which dissolved all connections, so that those whom the bishops or their chief excluded from the church communion, were degraded to a level with the brutes. Under this horrid sentence, the king, the ruler, the husband, the father, nay, even the *man* forfeited all their rights, all their advantages, the claims of nature, and the privileges of society.

History presents to our contemplation a gloomy moral picture during the ninth century. Many circumstances contributed to the general depravation. Among them may be reckoned the political calamities of the times, in which Ireland had her full share, the bloody and perpetual wars, the incursions and conquests of the barbarous nations, the gross and almost incredible ignorance of the nobility, and the affluence which flowed in upon the churches and religious communities from all quarters, encouraging luxury, self-indulgence, and licentiousness amongst those who professed to have renounced the pomps and vanities of the world, and rendering them too generally indifferent, and neglectful of their sacred functions.

A very corrupt ministry also, we are told, dishonoured the church; noblemen, who from indolence, want of talent, activity, or courage, were rendered incapable of appearing with dignity in the council, or with honour in the field, immediately turned their views to the church, and aimed at a distinguished place among its chiefs and rulers, becoming contagious examples of vicious indulgence and stupid neglect, to the inferior clergy: while the patrons of churches in whom

rested the right of election, unwilling to submit their ignorance and disorderly conduct to the keen censure of zealous and upright pastors, industriously sought out the most servile and worthless, to whom (to avoid accusation) they committed the important care of souls. But one of the circumstances which contributed in a particular degree to render at least the higher clergy irreverent and depraved, and to divert their minds from the peculiar duties of their sacred station, was the obligation they were under of performing certain military services to their sovereigns, in consequence of the possessions they derived from the royal bounty.

The bishops and heads of monasteries held many possessions by feudal tenure, and being thereby bound to furnish their princes with a certain number of soldiers in time of war, were obliged also to take the field themselves, at the head of their troops, and thus to act in a sphere utterly inconsistent with the nature and the duties of their sacred character; and we must all know how easily the mind loses her proper dominion, and becomes the slave of those inferior powers which it is her duty to hold in subjection, and the prey of those turbulent passions which follow in the train of ambition. Besides this, it often happened, and Ireland woefully proved it, that rapacious princes; in order to satisfy the craving wants of their soldiers and retainers, boldly invaded the possessions of the church, which they distributed among their armies. In consequence of which, the priests and monks, in order to avoid perishing through hunger, abandoned themselves to the practice of violence and fraud, which were regarded as the only means of procuring themselves a subsistence.

It was about the close of the eighth century

that Ireland experienced a formidable invasion of the Danes, called by the Irish by the general name of Normans, Galls, or foreigners, distinguishing their particular tribes by those of Daffgalls, Firgalls, and Danfhir, or Danes. By the Englishmen they were stiled Ostmen, or Eastmen collectively. They infested England, they threatened France, Charles the Great finding it necessary to fit out a navy to secure his coasts from their attacks. We have seen that Ireland was internally weak and disunited, and inferior in the art of war. The country was open and inviting to foreigners roving in search of new settlements.

The monarchical power was at this time enjoyed in alternate succession by two branches of the same race; the power of the monarch was feeble, the inferior dynasties factious and assuming: but great reverence was paid to religion and learning, correcting in a great degree the evils of the political constitution, the general state of the people being happy, and the country respected.

The first invasion was made in small places, for the sake of plunder; they were repelled by the chieftain, whose territory they invaded.

Other parties appeared in different parts, terrified the inhabitants with the havoc they committed, and were again opposed and repelled. Thus harassed during the long period of twenty years, the Irish yet formed no plan of union to repel the common enemy.

The northern pirates encouraged by this apathy and want of co-operation, gradually obtained some small settlements, and at length Tunges, a warlike Norwegian, landed with a powerful armament, dividing his fleet and army in order to strike terror in different quarters. His followers were permitted every species of outrage calculated to drive

the inhabitants to despair ; they burned, they massacred without regard to sex, age, or character, and of all others the clergy, who greatly abounded in Ireland, were persecuted by these ferocious Pagans with especial fury.

Those Danes who had formed settlements flocked to the standard of Tunges, and the invader seated himself in Armagh, from which he expelled the numerous clergy, lived on their lands, and acquired riches, with all the state of sovereignty.

The Irish, after some ill concerted and unsuccessful efforts, rendered so by their private competitions, sunk gradually into a state of abject submission, and Tunges, after a residence of thirty years in Ireland, was at length proclaimed monarch of the kingdom. The government of the usurper was odious to the feelings of the people, and severe in the highest degree. It was marked by oppression, extortion and insolence, particularly directed against learning and religion. All seminaries and religious institutions, with their books, utensils, and furniture were destroyed, and their clergy were banished to foreign countries, or to remote and miserable retreats in Ireland. Irish spirit at length revived, the usurper was seized by a prince of Meath; the joyful news quickly spread; the Danes were every where surprised by a sudden insurrection, massacred and dispersed, while their leader was condemned to death, which sentence was executed by precipitating him into a lake.

Thus the invaders were subjected, but not exterminated.,

Fiery as are the passions of the Irish, they quickly subside, and give place to indolence. They impolitically suffered the remnant of the Danes to remain as subjects, and tributaries to

particular chieftains. In consequence, a new colony arrived, professing peaceable intentions, and declaring their views commercial.

They were credulously received, and the Irish, as if infatuated, suffered them to become masters of Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, and other maritime places, which they secretly enlarged and fortified with works unknown to the Irish, and in which they remained secure, ready to receive reinforcements from their native country. Their power increased imperceptibly, while the Irish, proud and supine, engaged in national feuds and distractions, left them to extend their territories until they again threatened to dispute the sovereignty of the whole island.

At length roused from their apathy, the Irish attacked, pursued and defeated them, yet they still subsisted, sometimes acknowledging the superiority of the Irish, sometimes boldly asserting their independence, but still not subdued, nor considerably reduced.

The Irish annalists detail the actions of Cormac,* the reverend and learned prelate of Munster, during these contests with the Danes.

* Cormac M'Culinan was a prince celebrated by the Irish historians for his learning, piety, and valour. He wrote in his native language a history of Ireland, commonly called the Psalter of Cashel, which is still extant, and contains the most authentic account we have of the annals of the country to that period, about the year 900.

The royal seat and archbishopric of Cashel was formerly the metropolis of Munster, and on the ascent to the ca-

thedral is a large stone, on which every new king of Munster was, says tradition, solemnly proclaimed.

The ruins of the cathedral testify Cashel to have been a place of importance, and the structure extensive as well as handsome, boldly towering on the celebrated rock of Cashel, forms with it a magnificent object, bearing honourable testimony to the labour and ingenuity, as well as zeal and piety of its former inhabitants. It is seen at a great distance in

It is evident even from the imperfect history given by the Irish of these foreigners, that they were through the revolutions of some ages a very powerful and distinguished sept of Ireland. They embraced Christianity in the year 948, and their settlement was so well established, and consequence so considerable, that they engaged the attention of the neighbouring countries.

The most vigorous enemy whom the northern foreigners experienced in Ireland was Brian Boromy, a hero celebrated in the annals of his country. He was called by the death of his brother to the throne of Munster, when at an advanced age. Brian laboured to support his new dignity with the spirit of a veteran, whose life, spent with honour in the field, had endeared him to his countrymen, and with the prudence and moderation becoming a man, advanced to the age of seventy. Malcontents were subdued, the factious conciliated, those who had suffered in times of commotion were redressed, they who had been ejected from their possessions by the invaders were restored, they who had been reduced to a state of bondage were emancipated. The havoc caused by the invaders was repaired, the clergy restored to their endowments, churches and religious houses rose from their ruins, learned seminaries were re-established and enlarged, laws

many directions. Adjoining to it are the ruins of a chapel of Cormac M'Culinan, who was at once bishop and king of Cashel, or Munster; it is supposed to be the first stone building in Ireland, and seems by the rude imitation of pillars and capitals to have been copied from the Grecian architecture, and long to have preceded that

which is termed Gothic. Modern Cashel is small to what we may suppose it to have been in ancient days. The archbishop's palace is a fine building; there is a handsome market, sessions-house, county infirmary, and charter school for twenty children of each sex.

were reviewed, corrected, and strictly enforced. The venerable Brian was about to crown all the noble actions of his reign, by building and fitting out a formidable navy, in order to ensure the island from future invasion, when the Danes, injudiciously left in free possession of the maritime cities, invited their countrymen to their assistance, and the neighbouring Irish, impatient of the ancient tribute still exacted by the monarch, ungratefully concurred with the foreigners, and even encouraged and aided them in insurrection. The flame of war was kindled, and Brian at the advanced age of eighty-eight was called to the field. He lived to be the witness of the bravery of his son, Mortagh, and the victory of his troops. Mortagh fell in the field, and the venerable Brian was slain by some fugitives as he lay unguarded in his pavilion.

The Danes still continued their settlements in the country, they were governed by chiefs bearing the title of kings, and their church was modelled without the assistance or concurrence of the Irish, their Bishops being remitted for consecration to the primate of Canterbury. They had the more leisure to extend and to strengthen their settlements, as the Irish fell into deplorable political confusion. The country was harassed by competitions for the sovereignty, laws and religion lost their just influence, and licentiousness, violence, and immorality prevailed.

Donehad, the son of Brian, who had established his power in the south, endeavoured to do the same in the north, but was prevented by Turlogh, his nephew, who was proclaimed king by his faction. Donehad, after a series of hostilities and feuds, at length yielded to the superior power of his rival. Donehad presented an in-

stance of the selfish principle of contending princes, proving favourable to the pretensions of the Roman pontiffs, which had now arisen to an exorbitant degree of arrogance. Many bishops maintained, that the pontiff was not only Bishop of Rome, but of the whole world, an assertion they had not hitherto ventured to make. Acknowledging this supremacy, Donehad in the first anguish of disappointed ambition fled to Rome, laid his crown at the feet of the pontiff, promising to invest him with the sovereignty of Ireland. But he met with no assistance from the head of the church. Fearful of returning among his enemies, he assumed the habit of a religious, and immured himself in St. Stephen's abbey at Rome.

Turlogh thus left without competitor, exercised the monarchical power, although not formally elected or recognized. "But the defects of his title were," says archbishop Lanfranc, "supplied by the merit of his administration." The same prelate attributes the elevation of Turlogh to the gracious interposition of providence in favour of the Irish. Upon his decease, however, the state of things reverted to the confusion from which he had drawn them. The general state of religion was such as might be expected, in times of prevailing ignorance and corruption, an age which even the annalist of the Roman church, Baronius, styles "an iron age, barren of all goodness, a leaden age, abounding in all wickedness, and a dark age, remarkable above all others for the scarcity of writers, and men of learning." In fact the christian world was at this time enveloped in a thick veil of superstition, a heavy cloud which obscured from the sight of the illiterate, the craft and subtlety of those who had gained the empire over

their conscience, an empire which was further established by the universal belief of the final day of judgment being near.

The immense donations made to the church during the tenth century were drawn forth by the panic which had seized all the European nations. This is evident by the gifts being generally introduced with the sentence—"The end of all things being now at hand." Nor did this terror cease to operate on the minds of men till the century had passed away. Saints and ceremonies also greatly multiplied during this century. Towards the close of it, the famous annual festival celebrated in remembrance of all departed souls was instituted by the authority of Odile, abbot of Cluni, and the worship of the Virgin, which had previously been carried to a high degree of idolatry, received now new accessions of solemnity and superstition. The custom was also introduced of celebrating masses, and abstaining from flesh every Sunday, in honour of her. The rosary and crown of the Virgin was also instituted, by which her worshippers were to reckon the number of prayers they were to offer to her; the rosary consists in fifteen repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and one hundred and fifty repetitions of the salutation of the Virgin, while the crown, according to the different opinions of the learned concerning the age of the Virgin, consists in six or seven repetitions of the Lord's prayer, and six or seven times ten salutations, or Ave Marias; so abject and senseless had superstition become. The doctrine which exalted the papacy above all human power had gradually diffused itself from the immediate court of Rome, to the utmost limits of Christendom, and the authority and lustre of the Roman pontiffs arose imperceptibly to the highest degree during the tenth and eleventh centuries, although,

not without much opposition and many obstacles. Temporal dignities were accumulated every where upon the clergy, who gave themselves up, says an ecclesiastical writer, "to the pursuit of pleasure and ambition, frequenting the courts of princes with splendid retinues, and every mark of external magnificence." The pontiffs received the high sounding titles of masters of the world, and popes, viz. universal fathers; they presided every where in the councils, by their legates assumed the authority of supreme arbiters, of all controversies concerning religion and church discipline, and maintained the pretended rights of the church against the encroachments and usurpations of kings and princes. Their authority was yet, however, confined to certain limits restrained by princes from arrogantly aiming at civil dominion, and was opposed by the bishops, that it might not arise to entire spiritual despotism, and destroy the liberty and privileges of synods and councils. But the pontiffs assiduously endeavoured to remove these limits of their power, and to render their dominion despotic and universal, not only spiritually but politically; this restless ambition, however, of the aspiring popes was opposed by the emperors, the king of France, and William the Conqueror, who was the boldest assertor against the lofty claims of the apostolic see. It is to be lamented, that although they did this, they inconsistently had recourse to the influence of the pontiffs on the minds of the multitude, in order to accomplish their individual schemes of ambition, and thereby encouraged and cherished the pride and arrogance they dreaded, and otherwise opposed.

While William was projecting the invasion of England, for instance, he sent ambassadors to pope Alexander the second, in order, we are told by Matthew Paris, to have his undertaking justi-

fied and approved by apostolic authority; and the pope having considered the claims of the contending parties, sent a standard to William as the omen of his future royalty. When we reflect upon this, and many other similar instances, it cannot excite our surprise, that the popes aimed at, and finally obtained universal dominion, encouraged as they were by such submissions and servile homage from European princes.*

That the people during this age were sunk in the grossest superstition, is not to be wondered at, when the depravity of their teachers is recol-

* Under the pontificate of Hilderbrand, the face of the Latin church was in fact entirely changed; its government was subverted, and its most important rights and privileges usurped by him. The views of Hilderbrand, or Gregory VII. were not confined to an absolute spiritual dominion, but aimed at a civil monarchy, equally extensive and despotic; his decided purpose was to engage in the bands of allegiance and fidelity to St. Peter, that is, to the Roman pontiffs, all the kings and princes of the earth, and to establish at Rome an annual assembly of bishops, by whom the contests that might arise between kingdoms and sovereigns were to be decided, the rights and pretensions of princes to be examined, and the fall of nations and empires to be determined. In these aspiring projects he was opposed by France and England, and also by the emperor: his arrogance is exemplified in the

address made to Philip I. of France, to whom he recommends a humble and obliging carriage, from this consideration, "*that both his kingdom and his soul were under the dominion of St. Peter; namely, his vicar the Roman pontiff, who had the power to bind or to loose him both in heaven and upon earth.*" When Gregory wrote to William the Conqueror demanding the arrears of the Peter pence, and at the same time summoning him to do homage for the kingdom of England as a fief of the apostolic see, William granted the former, but refused the latter, declaring that he held his kingdom of God, and his own sword. It was under the administration of Gregory that the emperors lost the privilege of ratifying by their consent the election of the Roman pontiff, a privilege of no small importance, when we consider it in all its bearings, and reflect upon the concatenation of political events.

lected. Doubtless there were numberless judicious and pious men in existence, who were able and willing to support declining religion, but the prejudices of a barbarous age rendered all such attempts dangerous, and those elevated spirits who had soared above the general contagion, were too much concealed in the privacy of the cloister, or possessed of too little influence to combat, with any prospect of success, the formidable patrons of impiety and superstition, who were found in all ranks and orders, from the throne to the cottage. During the whole of this century, the European nations were, however, employed in rebuilding, repairing, and adorning their churches; for in the preceding century, the general panic as to the approach of the final day of judgment, had occasioned the churches and monasteries to remain without repair, from a notion that they would soon be inevitably involved in the general fate of all sublunary things. These apprehensions passed over; things immediately put on a new aspect, tottering temples were rebuilt, and the greatest zeal, with the richest and most liberal donations, were employed in restoring the sacred edifices to their former lustre, or rather, in giving them new degrees of beauty and magnificence. Thus while morals and religion might be said to have sunk to the lowest point of depression, men had recourse to externals and vain refuges, to still the monitions of conscience, and lay the flattering unction to their souls.

The arts and sciences revived, indeed, in a small degree, among the clergy and the monks; and this, in the British isles, may doubtless be attributed, to the conquest of the Normans, to whom is due the praise of restoring letters in England.

William possessed sagacity and genius. Though his severity rendered him hateful to his English

subjects, he certainly raised the tone of society, by introducing from Normandy and other countries, men of learning and talent, and exerted himself to dispel that ignorance which debased his new subjects, over whom, indeed, he ruled with a rod of iron. The reception of Christianity had, in a remarkable manner, changed the manners of the Normans. Under the darkness of paganism, they had evinced the utmost ferocity and aversion from all branches of knowledge, and every kind of instruction. But subsequent to their conversion, they distinguished themselves by an ardent application to the study of religion, and the pursuit of learning. Hence their rugged minds became comparatively polished and civilized. This desire of knowledge increased and extended itself rapidly, and became at length the impulsive spirit of the age. To it we must refer the rapid accumulation of schools at this period, and the more judicious choice of eminent and able masters to superintend them than before.

Towards the conclusion of the preceding age there were no schools, but those which belonged to monasteries or episcopal residences, each monastery being obliged to have one or two teachers resident, nor were there any other masters than the Benedictine monks to instruct the youth in the principles of sacred and profane erudition.*

* Benedictines. This order, which in a manner absorbed every other in the west, was instituted A. D. 529 by Benedict Nureia, a man of piety and reputation. The order made a rapid progress, and soon arrived at a most flourishing state. Its interest was promoted in Britain by Augustine and Melletus, and there were many mo-

nasteries of the order in Ireland.

The rules of Benedict were as follows :

They were obliged to perform their devotions seven times in the twenty-four hours, the circle of which had a reference to the passion and death of Christ. They were obliged always to go two and two to-

But not long after the commencement of the eleventh century, circumstances in this respect were changed. In many places learned men, both among the clergy and laity, undertook the arduous and important charge of instructing the youth, and succeeded much better in this worthy undertaking than the recluses had done, not only by

gether, every day in Lent to fast until the evening, and abated their usual time of eating and sleeping, but they were not allowed to practise any voluntary austerity without permission of their superior. They never conversed in the refectory at meals, but were obliged to attend to the reading of the scriptures. They occupied the same dormitory, but slept singly, reposing in their clothes. For small faults they were shut out from meals; for greater they were debarred religious commerce, and excluded from the chapel; and incorrigible offenders, were expelled from the community. Every monk had two coats, two cowls, a table book, a knife, a needle, and a handkerchief; and the furniture of their couch was a mat, a blanket, a rug, and a pillow. Their habit was a loose black coat or cloak with large wide sleeves, and a capuche or cowl, ending in a point behind: they were in the canon law styled Black friars, from their habit. The rule of discipline is obviously not encouraging either to luxury or ambition, and it was an obligation of the noviciate to promise not to infringe any rule on the penalty of expulsion. Yet hav-

ing acquired immense riches, the order gradually departed from its simplicity, and extended their zeal and attention to worldly affairs, insinuated themselves into the cabinets of princes, and took part in political cabals and court factions, while they made a great augmentation of superstitious rules and ceremonies in their order, to blind the multitude to the departure from their simplicity and virtue. Pope John the Twenty-second, who deceased 1334, made a curious calculation respecting the astonishing rise and extent of this order from the time of its institution to the period above. That there had been of it 24 popes, near 200 cardinals, 7000 archbishops, 15,000 bishops, 15,000 abbots of renown, above 4000 saints, and upwards of 37,000 monasteries! There have likewise been of this order, 20 emperors, and ten empresses, 47 kings, and 30 queens, 20 sons of emperors, and 48 sons of kings; about 1,000 princesses, daughters of emperors and kings, besides different degrees of nobility innumerable; the order has produced a vast number of eminent writers and learned men.

comprehending in their course of instruction, more branches of knowledge than the monastic doctors were acquainted with, but, perhaps, even more by teaching in a better method and with greater perspicuity, many of the same branches, in the knowledge of which the monks really possessed a superiority. The most eminent of these new masters, were those who had travelled into Spain with a view to study in the schools of the Saracens, or had improved their stock of erudition and philosophy by a diligent and attentive perusal of the writings of the Arabians, of which a great number were translated into Latin.

The learning indeed, says Milner, was not philosophical, like that of modern times, but consisted chiefly of grammar, rhetoric, and logic. It was, however, connected with divinity, the scriptures were held in veneration, the hardy presumption of subtle theory, and the supercilious negligence concerning piety and public worship were then unknown among men. Amongst the fruits of Christianity, we may remark the forbearance of the northern nations, who, towards the close of this century ceased to invade the southern. One attempt only was made by Magnus, king of Norway, to invade Ireland. He landed without opposition, and ventured to penetrate the country, but he was suddenly surrounded, for the Irish were accustomed, instead of meeting their enemies with warlike parade, to watch their advantage, and dart unexpectedly upon them. Magnus and his party were cut to pieces. Hume attributes the forbearance of this restless people to disturb their neighbours, to their addicting themselves to agriculture, which occupied them at home: and Milner, with his usual piety, refers the tractable spirit which induced them to submit to domestic labour rather than remain rovers, to

the influence of Christianity, which they had received, it would appear, with sincerity, if it induced peace, order, and tranquillity. But, although Magnus thus fell a victim to his temerity, Ireland was decreed to become a conquest, and the domestic contentions which continually disquieted it, rendered the conquest no difficult undertaking, aided as it was, by the assumptions of the Roman pontiff, who, it will be seen, strikingly displayed his arrogant pretensions, in attaching, without hazard and expense, an extensive island to his spiritual jurisdiction, under the plea of its imperfect conversion.

CHAPTER IV.

Circumstances render Ireland an easy conquest—Motives and designs of Henry not divulged—Obstacles to his invasion—He requires the sanction of the pope—Gains it—The bull authorising him to invade Ireland—Reforms in the Irish church—Cardinal Papanon—Irish supposed to know the intentions of Henry, but make no preparations—Delays of the design—Domestic factions of Ireland expedite it—Roderick O' Connor—Dermod Mac Murchad—His ferocious character—His solicitation of foreign aid—Application to Henry—He gives him a letter of credence—Dermod disappointed in its prevailing power—He applies to Earl Strongbow—With difficulty succeeds in obtaining a promise of aid—Gains the assistance of Fitzstephens and Fitzgerald—Returns to Ireland privately, but soon avows his designs—Fitzstephens arrives in Ireland, alarms the inhabitants—Attempts the siege of Wexford; is obliged to retire—Renews hostilities—Influence of the clergy in conciliation—Dermod refreshes the troops at Fernes—Monastic luxury—A series of engagements ensue—Roderick defeated—Strongbow applies to Henry; receives an implied assent to his design—Terror of the Irish—Their expedient to avert the anger of heaven—Favourable turn of affairs—Dermod defeated—Henry, jealous of his nobles, issues peremptory orders to withdraw from Ireland—Strongbow despatches a messenger to him, explanatory of his views—Henry's tardiness—Distressed state of the British troops in Ireland—The decease of Dermod increases the perplexity—Spirit of Lawrence, archbishop of Dublin—The English reduced to great difficulty—Terms offered them rejected—Act of desperate valour—Dissensions and hostilities renewed—Act of treachery—Henry prepares to pass over to Ireland—His resentment against his nobles propitiated—The Irish exhibit no loyalty, but with a selfish and sordid spirit many even meet and submit to the invader—They are received with condescension by Henry.

CENTURIES ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH.

MANY circumstances rendered Ireland an easy conquest to any power, who might have made it an object of acquisition; but in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the peculiar state of the neigh-

bouring kingdoms was by no means favourable to the attempt, although the internal situation of Ireland was not unknown to England and other kingdoms.

The Irish chieftains were celebrated for their valour, and we have seen that learning and piety were also eminently displayed amongst them; but Ireland not only was the retreat of learning, but the refuge sought by distressed nobles or factious leaders. For instance, on the disgrace of Earl Godwin, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, Harold, his son, retreated to Ireland, and there formed such connections as proved the resource of his family, when William, his Norman rival, was in the height of his glory and prosperity. His three sons also fled thither immediately after the fatal battle of Hastings, and in the reign of William led an Irish army into England, to assert the liberty of their country and the pretensions of their family. They were however defeated, and obliged to retreat with great loss to Ireland. France is also said to have drawn considerable succours from Ireland in several of her wars, and the Irish annalists even say, that such assistance first excited the jealousy of Henry II. of England, and urged him to the measure of annexing Ireland to his dominions. But the motives and designs of Henry, belong rather to the civil than the ecclesiastical history of Ireland. It is only necessary to say, that such design had been long formed, as a very superficial knowledge of the island was sufficient to awaken the ambition of a powerful and popular sovereign, at a period when it was considered reproachful to any distinguished character, not to be engaged in some gallant or pious exercise, but the disputes of Henry with the hierarchy respecting Becket, the general state of Europe, and the turbulent spirit of the barons and

great vassals, had prevented the fulfilment of a measure which he had not, however, lost sight of, amidst his various other domestic and foreign engagements.

A pretence alone was wanting, to colour with some appearance of justice, a design of invading a kingdom, which had confined itself to its own internal affairs, without interfering with those of its neighbours. Such pretences were soon found; royalty is generally surrounded by flatterers, who watch the prince's ambitious designs, and are seldom deficient in plausible arguments to justify them to the mind, that is prepared by previous inclination. Though the sagacity of Henry could not admit many of the reasons offered to justify his invasion of the sister kingdom, yet the same sagacity, aided by the suggestions of an interested and subtile ecclesiastic, soon supplied the necessary pretence for the indulgence of his ambition. This was also in perfect accordance with the spirit of the age, which yielded, in such a pusillanimous manner, to the assumptions of the popes. They had succeeded so well in their ambitious views of authority, that they confined the election to the papacy, to the conclave of cardinals alone; they usurped the privilege of nominating and investing sovereigns with their dignity, even claiming the power of erecting new kingdoms and disposing of territories, thereby imperiously dictating to kings and nations in their secular concerns. Thus we have seen the pontiff decide in favour of the claims of William the Norman, and denounce spiritual vengeance against those who should dispute or resist them. Stephen, although an ungrateful usurper, obtained a ratification of his power from the same quarter, a proof, as is justly observed by our elegant historian, that the sentiment of religion corrupted into

superstition, has often very little efficacy in fortifying the duties of civil society.

To this power Henry the Second determined to resort, and thus, with a confined and selfish policy, unworthy his character, gave a sanction to claims dangerous to all sovereigns, and this, for what might almost be termed an imaginary advantage, and certainly to aid a design contrary to the principles of strict justice, however he might seek to gloss it over by pretending an anxious desire to extend the church of God on earth.

In the important negociation of obtaining the sanction of a papal decree for his meditated invasion of a people who had never given any reason of complaint to neighbouring states, Henry employed John Salisbury, his chaplain, upon whose zeal and diligence he had the greatest dependence; nor did Salisbury disappoint his expectation; for, aware that his success would equally recommend him to his royal and spiritual masters, he left no energy of his sagacious mind unemployed to aid the design. He represented to Adrian the Fourth, who then filled the papal chair, that the inhabitants of Ireland were sunk into the most wretched state of corruption, moral and religious; and that his royal master ever zealous for the furtherance of piety and the honour of God, had conceived the laudable and pious design of ameliorating the abject condition of an unhappy country, situated so near to his own kingdom, and was anxious to devote himself and all his power to the meritorious service. With this view, he implored the benediction of the holy father, and requested his permission and authority to enter Ireland, to reduce the disobedient, to reclaim the corrupt, to eradicate sin and wickedness, to instruct the ignorant, and to disseminate the blessed influence of the gospel, in its purity and perfection, promising, at

the same time, to pay a yearly tribute to St. Peter from the land thus to be reduced to his obedience and that of the holy see. Can we have a stronger instance than the above of the tendency of avarice and ambition, to cloud the judgment and to deprave the nobility of the soul? "Habituated, as we may be," says an elegant historian, "to the depravity of mankind, we cannot seriously reflect upon the profane hypocrisy of this transaction, without the utmost horror." In the blindness of his ambition, little did the ardent Henry foresee the perplexities he was to experience from the power he thus injudiciously aided to aggrandize, or the weight of the oppression it was to place upon him. Adrian secretly exulting in an application so favourable to the enormous claims of the Romish see, which so unequivocally recognized his supreme authority; and, moreover, as an Englishman, well pleased to gratify his royal countryman, a prince of exalted character and abilities, easily entered into the political views, and admitted the persuasive arguments of the negociator. And this he was more particularly induced to, by the consideration of the imperfect conversion of the Irish, which he inferred from their following the doctrines of their first teachers, never having acknowledged any subjection to the see of Rome, or at least, had not been disposed to acknowledge its supremacy till long after other countries had done so. All ecclesiastical authority having been, till within about four years previous to Henry's accession to the throne of England, exercised by her own prelates, nor had the ceremonies and discipline of the Irish church, points considered of the greatest moment in that age of externals, been conformable to those of Rome. At that period, however, the pontificate, by the indefatigable and interested zeal of its

numerous and ever active emissaries, had at length extended its fearful influence even to an island so remote, and alarmed the Irish clergy with hints of the irregularity of their ecclesiastical constitution, persuading them to submit to a reform, to be modelled and dictated by Rome. Cardinal Papanon was accordingly, in the year 1152, admitted into Ireland with a legantine commission. Three thousand ecclesiastics assembled by his direction in the town of Drogheda; four palls were solemnly received from the pope by the prelates of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam. The celebration of Easter was adjusted according to the Romish decisions; and for the further reformation of the church, the celibacy of the clergy was enforced, and their privileges and properties secured by various canons.* Thus, although a passion for intellectual improvement was very strong in this century, and the human mind by exercise recovered a large portion of its lost tone and vigour, yet it did not enable the people to see the folly of enslaving themselves to the popedom, for subtilty of mind, rather than depth of research and close thinking, marked the learning that prevailed; although the voice of natural conscience and the dictates of common sense guided not a few, who felt the temporal oppression of ecclesiastic tyranny, and yet with strange inconsistency, aided

* The dispute respecting Easter, was not respecting the *rite itself*, but the particular time when the festival was to be kept. The Asiatic churches celebrated their Easter upon the same days the Jews observed their passover, viz. the 14th day of their first month, chiefly answering to our March, and this they did upon what day of the week soever it fell, and from

thence they were styled Quarto Decimans; keeping Easter upon the 14th day after the appearance of the moon. The other churches, especially those of the west, kept Easter upon the Lord's day following the Jewish passover. These latter pleaded apostolical tradition, the Asiatics the practice of the apostles themselves.

the church of Rome in its aspirings, and were borne forward by the superstitious torrent of the times.

"The celibacy of the clergy," says Hume, "was a great object in the politics of the Roman pontiffs, and it cost them infinitely more pains to establish it, than the propagation of any speculative absurdity which they had ever attempted to introduce." It proves, therefore, the influence obtained among the Irish clergy, and that it was agitated and enforced in the numerous assembly called by Cardinal Papanon. A friendly, or perhaps, we should more properly say, a filial correspondence was now opened by Ireland with the Romish church, and her supremacy formally acknowledged. It remained, therefore, only for the pope to improve these auspicious openings, to which nothing could more greatly conduce than the application made to him by the agent of Henry, which at once enabled him to extend his new dominion in Ireland, and also to conciliate the friendship of a great monarch. A bull was accordingly framed without delay, altogether conformable to the wishes and purposes of Henry. We here give it at large as a fair specimen of the arrogant hypocrisy and plausibility of papal usurpation and pretension.

"Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his dearest son in Christ, the illustrious king of England, greeting and apostolic benediction. Full laudably and profitably hath your magnificence conceived the design of propagating your glorious renown on earth, and completing your reward of eternal happiness in heaven, while, as a catholic prince, you are intent on enlarging the borders of the church, teaching the truth of the Christian faith to the ignorant and rude, exterminating the roots of vice from the field of the Lord, and for the more convenient execution of

this purpose requiring the counsel and favour of the apostolic see. In which, the maturer your deliberation and the greater the discretion of your procedure, by so much the happier, we trust, will be your progress, with the assistance of the Lord, as all things are used to come to a prosperous end and issue which take their beginning from the ardour of faith and the love of religion. There is, indeed, no doubt but that Ireland, and all the islands on which Christ the sun of righteousness hath shone, and which have received the doctrines of the Christian faith, do belong to the jurisdiction of St. Peter and of the holy Roman church, as your excellency also doth acknowledge. And, therefore, we are the more solicitous to propagate the righteous plantation of faith in this island, and the branch acceptable to God, as we have the secret conviction of conscience that this is more especially our bounden duty.

“ You then, most dear son in Christ, have signified to us your desire to enter into the island of Ireland, in order to reduce the people to obedience unto laws, and to extirpate the plants of vice; and that you are willing to pay from each house a yearly pension of one penny to Saint Peter, and that you will preserve the rights of the churches of this land whole and inviolate. We, therefore, with that grace and acceptance suited to your pious and laudable design, and favourably assenting to your petition, do hold it good and acceptable, that, for the extending the borders of the church, restraining the progress of vice, for the correction of errors, the planting of manners, and the increase of religion, you enter this island, and execute therein whatever shall pertain to the honour of God, and the welfare of the land; and that the people of this land receive you honourably, and reverence you

as their lord; the rights of the churches still remaining sacred and inviolate, and saving to St. Peter the annual pension of one penny from every house.

“ If then you be resolved to carry the design you have conceived into effectual execution, study to form this nation to virtuous manners, and labour by yourself, and others whom you shall judge meet for this work, in faith, word, and life, that the church may be there adorned, that the religion of the Christian faith may be planted and grow up, and that all things pertaining to the honour of God and the salvation of souls, be so ordered, that you may be entitled to the fullness of eternal reward from God, and obtain a glorious renown on earth throughout all ages.”

The Bull, thus artfully framed, was presented to king Henry, who, however his high spirit might revolt from its assumptions, determined to arm himself with the authority, although being engaged on the continent at the time he received it, he could not immediately put his design in execution. There is ground, however, to believe that the Irish ecclesiastics were very soon informed of the existence of a document, which, virtually at least, charged them with corruption and barbarism; for, from the date of Adrian's Bull, the annalists mention several synods, wherein regulations were repeated and enforced, as it were, in solicitude to remove the imputations against their church; in their simplicity not reflecting that such imputations were necessary to the purposes of the Holy See.

The annalists state, that they made the most salutary ordinances, not only for the preservation of clerical discipline, but also for the reformation of manners, and carefully providing for the edu-

cation of their clergy. Armagh was then their most reputed seat of learning; and, by a solemn ordinance it was provided, that no one should be allowed to profess or teach theology, in any of their churches, who had not been educated in this seminary.

But whether their zeal and solicitude were merely accidental, arising from the general impulse the minds of men, had about that period received, or purposely intended to demonstrate that ecclesiastical reformation needed not the interference of foreign aid; the ambitious conspiracy, as it may be termed, between the Pope and Henry, was sufficiently alarming; and, had any political union existed in Ireland, would have roused its inhabitants to have asserted their independence, and armed them with vigour to resist its invasion. The Irish had ample time to have prepared themselves for this resistance, for a succession of obstacles, arising from various agitating causes, both on the continent and in his English dominions, obliged Henry to suspend his design against Ireland. It in fact seemed nearly to have passed into oblivion, when the domestic factions in Ireland itself revived it, and internal dissensions opened a way for the English arms and power to penetrate into that country. It will be necessary to take a cursory view of the civil state of Ireland at this period, in order to illustrate the ecclesiastical. Besides numerous small tribes, there were five principal sovereignties existing in the island, viz. Munster, Leinster, Meath, Ulster, and Connaught; and as it had been usual for the one or the other of these to take the lead in their wars, there was commonly some prince who seemed for a time to act as monarch of Ireland. Roderick O'Connor, king of Connaught, was, in the age of Henry II. advanced to this dignity; but his

government, feebly administered, was ill obeyed even in his own territory, and was quite inadequate to unite the people in general in any measures, either for the establishment of political order, or for defence against foreign invasion.

The province of Leinster was divided into several inferior principalities, governed generally by their own chieftains, but gave the title of royalty to Dermod Mac Murchad, a prince, who, even in an age and country of rudeness appears, from the accounts of his countrymen, to have been distinguished for his vices and his fierce and oppressive spirit. Endowed by nature, however, with a commanding stature and great physical strength, combined with that boisterous valour which commands the popular wonder and admiration, he possessed great influence over the inferior orders of his countrymen, whom, as the useful instruments of his ambition, he was careful to protect and favour. His donations and endowments of religious houses, probably arising from the same interested policy, recommended him to the clergy; but his tributary chieftains felt his unmitigated pride and tyranny. We must refer our readers to other histories for a detail of the series of aggressions which at length urged the enemies of Dermod to invade his province with irresistible force, to depose him, as utterly unworthy of his high station, and to compel him to give sureties for his submission and fidelity to the monarch whom he had injured. As is commonly the case with those who have abused their power, he experienced the desertion of his tributaries on his change of fortune, they even united with his enemies. His submission was as abject, and his flattery as servile, as his pride had been lofty and his arrogance inordinate. Defeated, degraded, raging with malignant resentment,

he desperately resolved to quit the kingdom, and seek in foreign countries the means of regaining his state and gratifying his revenge. He chose England as his immediate place of refuge from his powerful foes, and, with only sixty followers, hastily embarked for the port of Bristol.

In England, the odious traits of his character were unknown, and with that generous credulity which believes well of individuals till proved to be criminal, so peculiarly characterizing Britons, he was considered to be an injured prince, deserted by his turbulent and rebellious vassals, and forced from his rightful dominions by base usurpation and iniquitous violence. He was accordingly, under these favourable impressions, received with every mark of respect and pity, especially by the clergy, who entertained the friend and benefactor of their order, in the monastery of St. Augustine, with the utmost hospitality.* Dermot learned from them that Henry, whom he could not but think his sole resource, was engaged in Aquitain; thither he proceeded without

* Augustines, an order so called from Augustine, whose rule they observe: they are popularly styled Austin Friars; were originally hermits. Alexander the Fourth first congregated them into one body, under their general Lanfranc, in 1256. Soon after their institution, this order was introduced into England, where they possessed about thirty-two houses at the time of the suppression. They are clothed in black, and constitute one of the five orders of mendicants. From these arose a reform, under the denomination of

barefoot Augustines, or Minorites—friars minor.

There are also canons regular of St. Augustine, who are clothed in white, except their cope, which is black: these are known at Paris under the appellation of the religious of Genevieve, that Abbey being the chief of the order. There are also nuns and canonesses, who observe the rules of Saint Augustine. In England, this order made great progress, in two hundred years. There were thirty kings and queens who preferred the religious habit to their crowns and founded stately monasteries.

Delay, obtained an immediate interview, and, throwing himself at the feet of the monarch, implored his assistance and protection against his rebellious subjects; offering, upon his compliance, to acknowledge him as his liege lord, and to hold his dominions (which, by the interposition of so magnanimous a prince, he was confident of regaining) in vassalage to Henry and his heirs. To Henry, whose views had been so long directed towards Ireland, nothing could be more agreeable than this unexpected petition of Dermot, as it not only revived all the flattering ideas he had conceived respecting the island, but gave him such a just pretence for hostile measures; yet embarrassed at the time by the rebellions of his French subjects, and involved in a contest with the hierarchy, through the violence and obstinacy of the imperious Becket, he was too busily employed to enter personally into the proposals of Dermot. Still, determined to improve the incident as far as his situation permitted, he treated Dermot with the highest consideration, made him munificent presents, and accepted his tender of allegiance. He proceeded yet further, by giving the Irish prince a letter of credence, addressed to all his subjects, notifying his grace and protection granted to the king of Leinster, and assuring those who were disposed to aid him in the recovery of his rights, of free licence and royal favour. Dermot, supported by this authority, and elated by the courtly reception he had experienced from Henry, returned to Bristol with the most confident hopes of deriving important advantages from the credentials of the English monarch. At Bristol he published Henry's letter, and with the insinuating art, which he well knew how to assume, lavished his promises on all those who should assist the friend

and vassal of their sovereign. But all this had little effect, either his true character and the demerits of his cause had become known, or a disadvantageous idea had been formed of his country; for, even in those days of enterprize and adventure, no one was found to take arms in his cause. Dermot, thus disappointed in his sanguine expectations of British aid, began to despond, but determined to make a desperate effort, he addressed himself to Richard, earl of Chepstow or Strigul, a nobleman of the house of Clare, known by the titles both of Chepstow and Pembroke, and of considerable note and consequence in Wales. This nobleman, who had impaired his fortune by extravagance, was distinguished for military genius, possessed an elevated station and great alliances, was attended by a numerous train of vassals, over whom his courtesy and generosity had given him great influence; but he was estranged from royal favour, he lived retired and disengaged, a prey to that gloom which was the natural fruit of self-created distress, dissipated fortune, disappointed ambition, and dark prospects. Such a character offered every hope to Dermot that his overtures would be attended to, and he failed not to press the haughty Earl Richard with the most urgent solicitations. But these were received with coldness and reserve, which ill suited the ardent and violent Dermot. He had to excite to action a man, who, in any affair in which he was to take a leading part, considered every difficulty minutely, and brought forth every objection to bear with full force. Richard could not be persuaded to consider the general licence of Henry sufficient warrant to justify a measure of such consequence, as that of conducting his vassals into a foreign country. Dermot persisted in his arguments and redoubled his promises, and

at length the earl yielded to the tempting offers of receiving in marriage Eva, the daughter of Dermod, and of being declared the heir of the dominions he was solicited to assist in recovering. He covenanted to assist the crafty Dermod with a considerable force, which was appointed to be transported to Ireland the ensuing spring, provided he could obtain the king's particular licence and approbation. Elevated by the success thus obtained by his perseverance, Dermod retired to St. David's, in South Wales, in order to pass privately over to Ireland, to collect his few adherents, and to prepare for the reception of his ally. The bishop of St. David's received the fugitive with undissembled kindness, and exerted himself to obtain friends to a prince, whose munificence to the clergy had made him every where a favourite of the order, notwithstanding the crimes that disgraced him. Through the intervention and persuasions of the prelate, Robert Fitzstephens, constable of Abertivi, and Maurice Fitzgerald were engaged in the cause, and with some other adventurous knights of Wales, promised to take a part in the Irish expedition. Dermod, promising on his part to cede to the principal leaders, Fitzstephens and Fitzgerald, the entire dominion of the town of Wexford, with a large adjoining territory, as soon as he should be reinstated in his rights.

Dermod, being now assured of succour, returned privately to his own state, and sheltering in the monastery of Fernes, which he had founded, he prepared every thing for his British allies.

We have thus given a rapid sketch of the original scheme of an invasion, which in the event, was fraught with so many important consequences, connected with the immediate plan of

our work. We shall follow the historian, from whom we have drawn the account, in his interesting detail of the progress of the principal agent.* And it is worthy of remark, that an important scheme, which we have seen receiving the sanction of the Holy See, was effected by a discomfited fugitive and a few adventurous spirits, whom pursuit of fortune and youthful valour led into Ireland, in hopes of advantageous settlements. Previous to his departure, Dermod had paid his vows in the church of St. David's, and upon his arrival at Fernes, he took care to magnify to the clergy in particular, the gracious reception he had received from Henry, and the disposition of the English in his favour.

By this means he well knew he should best ensure the co-operation he required; and, as the secret of his return could not be long concealed, he assumed the air of the ut nost confidence. Yet was he secretly distracted and terrified; tormented by delay, and dreading disappointment, he dispatched a faithful vassal into England, to hasten the promised succours, and to solicit others, with unbounded promises of rich settlements and large rewards to all adventurers. While thus seeking foreign aid, he had recourse to all those superstitions which the pomp of gaudy worship led men to practise, as propitious to their worldly views; for, in vain ceremonies, bodily austerities and exercises, and especially in a blind veneration for their spiritual guides, mankind seemed to place the whole of religion. Relics were regarded more than redeeming merit, and prayers to saints deemed more acceptable to God, than those offered through the Saviour.

* From this historian (Le-land) we have so largely extracted, that, not to acknow-

ledge our obligations would justly render our literary integrity to be doubted.

This was a religion which well suited such characters as Dermod, and was also abundantly calculated to multiply them. The troops of Fitzstephens were first ready, and, though a small body, being brave men, well acquainted with discipline, and completely armed, they on disembarking in Ireland, struck terror into the inhabitants, as menacing them with some fearful revolution. They were withstood, however, with the spirit of undisciplined and undirected valour, and as numbers on each side were nearly equal, the Irish courage and conduct was brought to severe trial. Fitzstephens, in the first instance attempted the siege of Wexford; it made an obstinate defence, and obliged him to retire. But the spirit of Fitzstephens was not to be subdued by one repulse; he drew off his men to the shore, set fire to his transports, and the following day, having first ordered divine service to be performed in his camp, he disposed his forces with greater care, and again led them to the assault, animated by devotion, impatient of their late disgrace, and convinced of the necessity of conquering.

The garrison were not unobservant of their motions, and accustomed to decide their contests by one vigorous effort, they were astonished at the persevering resolution of their assailants. The clergy in particular were terrified, and made the most pathetic remonstrances against an opposition which must prove fatal to all within the walls. It was at length agreed to treat with the besiegers, and a deputation of the inhabitants, headed by two bishops, were sent to settle terms of capitulation. The insolence of Dermod protracted this treaty for three days, when the authority of his prelates, and the advice of his foreign allies at length prevailed. He accepted the submission of his terrified subjects, and en-

tered Wexford in triumph. Thus, although the religion of the age was debased by superstition, the influence of the clergy was very frequently of great service in checking the excesses and calming the passions of men. It not only united an immense number of men in one body; possessing a great sway over the community, but also kept that community entire, shaken as it was by the factious and independent power of proud and arrogant chieftains. And what was also of infinite importance in a turbulent and unquiet age, it gave a mighty authority to men, who tempered by their mediation, (as in the instance which has drawn forth our remarks), the general disposition towards violence and hostility, and, who from their profession still maintained, even amidst the shock of arms, those secret links without which the chain of society would be utterly deranged and destroyed.

After a few days residence at Wexford, Dermot led the British forces to his previous sanctuary at Fernes, where three weeks were passed in refreshing the soldiers, feasting their commanders, and concerting future operations. That the hospitality they enjoyed in the abbey of Fernes was of no mean description, may be inferred from the declaration of Bernard, in what he terms his apology.

In painting, the pride and vanity of the abbots, their superfluity and magnificence in dress, furniture, equipage and buildings, he observes they looked more like governors of provinces than the spiritual fathers of holy and humble communities, whose original profession it was to be dead and crucified to the interests and pleasures, the pomps and vanities of the present world.

With a pious concern he adds, "that he knew several abbots, each of whom had above sixty horses in his stables, and such a prodigious va-

riety of wines in his cellars, that it was scarcely possible to taste the half of them in a single entertainment."*

By the accession of the garrison, the army of Dermod was augmented to three thousand men, and a series of engagements ensued, ultimately terminating in the defeat of Roderick, the chief

* The monks at St. Swithin's, at Winchester, made a formal complaint to Henry II. against their abbot, for taking away three of the thirteen dishes they used to have every day at dinner. The monks at Canterbury were still more luxurious, they had seventeen dishes every day, besides a desert, and these dishes were dressed with spiceries and sauces, which excited the appetite as well as pleased the taste. As an instance of the splendour and hospitality of the monasteries, we may cite the celebrated abbey of Cluny, composed of benedictines, founded by William, duke of Berry and Aquitaine, in the year 910. This abbey was anciently so very spacious and magnificent, that in 1254, after holding the first council at Lyons, pope Innocent IV. went to Cluny, accompanied by the two patriarchs of Antioch and Constantinople, twelve cardinals, three archbishops, fifteen bishops, and a great number of abbots, who were all entertained without any of the monks being put out of their place, or inconvenienced, though Saint Louis, queen Blanche his mother, the duke of Artois his

brother, and his sister, with the emperor of Constantinople, the sons of the kings of Arragon and Castile, the duke of Burgundy, six counts, and a great number of lords, with all their retinues, were there at the same time. Cluny at its first creation was put under the protection of the apostolic see, with express prohibition to all secular and ecclesiastic powers to disturb the monks in the possessions of their effects, or the election of their abbot. By this they assumed to be exempted from the jurisdiction of bishops, which at length gave the hint to other abbeys to insist on the same. The Cluniac fraternity was the first congregation of various monasteries, united under one chief, so as only to constitute one body, or as it is termed one order.

This order was introduced into England by William, earl of Warrenne, son in law to William the Conqueror, who built a house for them at Lewes, in Sussex, about 1077. There were twenty-seven priories and cells of this order in England, which were governed by foreigners, afterwards made denizens.

monarch of the island, and the submission of the prince of Ossory, against whom revenge as well as policy had instigated the imperious Dermod : but treachery as well as arms produced the result, and Dermod, not content with being reinstated in his kingdom of Leinster, with that lofty pretension usual in tyrannical tempers, when inflated with success, projected the dethroning of the defeated Roderick, and aspired to sole dominion.

It would lead us too far in digression, to detail the plans and operations of Dermod in the prosecution of these lofty views, but it is necessary to say, that he dispatched a messenger to earl Richard, challenging the performance of his promise, and displaying the great and certain advantages which might at such a juncture be obtained by a reinforcement of troops; but Richard, not satisfied with the general licence of Henry to all his subjects, and perhaps with natural sagacity, foreseeing the important result, determined to apply to his monarch then in Normandy.*

Henry, who by no means desired that his subjects should make too considerable a progress in Ireland without his aid, and interposition, was perplexed how to act, as he could not put a negative upon the present application of earl Richard, without disavowing his general licence. He therefore evaded direct reply, and under various pretences deferred an explicit answer to his petition. Richard, flattered by the promises of Dermod, of wealth and honour, awaiting the fulfilment of his engagements, stung with the neglect of his sovereign, and op-

* Richard seems never to have departed from his caution, for he sent with Fitzstephens his uncle Henry of Mountmorris, to survey the

country and report its state and circumstances, so as to direct him in his intended enterprize. Henry had no military train.

pressed with his necessities, renewed his application importunately, till the fiery Henry passionately commanded him to begone, with some equivocal expressions which might be construed into assent. Richard determined, so to interpret them, and indignant at the violence of his liege lord, departed from his presence, and prepared for his expedition with all imaginable vigour.

After many conflicts and enormities committed by all parties, the cause of Dermod and his auxiliaries prevailed. "Every day," says Leland, "were now spread through the island fearful accounts of the power, progress, and devastations of these foreigners, the depopulation of whole districts, the miseries of the inhabitants, ravages, massacres, and all the affecting incidents of war, terrible in themselves, and magnified by report. The people were in dismay, their monarch had shrunk from the danger; they who were most exposed or threatened, directed their thoughts to heaven, and besought the clergy to devise some means for deprecating the divine wrath which had thus visited the nation. The clergy, scarcely more enlightened than their ignorant flock, had formed some crude notions of the miraculous interpositions of providence, and concluded that the national calamities must be the consequence of such interposition, and ordained as a punishment of some particular offence. The laity were corrupt and vicious: the clergy shared too deeply in the depravity of the times. Yet utterly at a loss to determine *what* this particular offence might be, which had brought down such a heavy judgment upon their land, they convened a formal synod at Armagh, to inquire into the interesting point, as if they were to be favoured with some extraordinary communications of the divine will.

After a long and solemn debate, it was suggested, and unanimously agreed by the synod; that the real cause of the divine displeasure, which Ireland now experienced, could be no other than their unchristian practice of purchasing and selling Englishmen as slaves, an iniquity which the Almighty now seemed to punish by English invaders, who threatened to reduce all Ireland to slavery. By the spiritual authority of the synod it was ordained, that every English bondsman should be emancipated. This solemn determination served to raise the people from their dejection, as they, upon better ground than usual in such cases, conceived they had now discovered and removed the latent cause of the calamity. Clouded by superstition as was the subject of debate in this spiritual synod, the result indicated a faint notion of union between Christian doctrine and practice : it is pleasing to trace this in any manner during the darkness of the period. It is true the literary improvements of the times rendered the intellectual faculties more acute, but while scripture was too generally neglected and the salutary doctrines of the gospel were in a manner buried in darkness, learning could produce few benign effects on the manners of mankind. Of course we speak generally, for doubtless there were many individual instances, both among the laity and the recluses, who studied, and who practised something nobler and better than superstition, though the glare of fictitious holiness which invested the church prevented them from beholding their object clearly and perspicuously.

But to return to the state of the unfortunate Irish ; their affairs did subsequent to this period assume a more favourable aspect. Dermot, insolently venturing to pursue his advantages, was defeated, and obliged to a precipitate retreat, and

another unlooked for cause of alleviation occurred to relieve the oppressed people.

Henry, jealous of the progress made by subjects; in a design which he appears personally desirous to effect, sent peremptory orders to withdraw the English, and made preparations for an attack in person. He was doubtless jealous of the success, and particularly of the increasing power of earl Richard, who by his alliances in England, his acquisitions, and marriage with Eva, he was aware might be enabled to defy his authority, and soon obtain an independent sovereignty of formidable extent, and which with sagacity he foresaw might become exceedingly injurious to his tranquillity and political interests. He therefore issued his royal edict, strictly prohibiting any English vessel from crossing to Ireland with arms, men, or provisions, and commanding all his subjects resident in Ireland, and of every order and degree, to return to their native country before the ensuing feast of Easter, on pain of forfeiting their lands, and being declared traitors. This measure was a cruel blow to the prosperous adventurers. Strongbow, for such was the familiar title of earl Richard, with characteristic calmness, maturely revolved the danger, and the means to avert it. Well acquainted with the character of Henry, and as well aware of the secret motives of his present resentment, he determined to send his faithful adherent Raymond de Gross with letters to the monarch then resident in Aquitain; these letters contained the most humble submissions from himself and fellow adventurers, declaring that they were fighting only for their sovereign, to reduce the stubborn spirits of the Irish to his obedience, whatever they had gained was for him, and should remain at his disposal, as the natural and rightful lord of the present possessors, whose lives

and fortunes were devoted to him, and who were still ready to obey his royal mandate of quitting their acquisitions, should it be again required, or deemed necessary to the interests of the crown. Raymond proceeded to the execution of his commission, he was received by Henry with the severe dignity of an offended monarch, not displeased at his representations, yet not disposed to give an explicit, much less a favourable answer. From day to day Raymond attended on the court, while his spirits were harassed at the suspense, and by the consciousness that the affairs of his associates became every day more distressing and alarming. At this critical juncture intelligence was received of the death of Becket. Henry was thrown into the utmost consternation at that fatal catastrophe, and had neither leisure nor inclination to attend to the less interesting affairs of Ireland. While in this state of expectation and anxiety, of difficulty and apprehension, the adventurers were alarmed by another incident, deeply involving the interests of their situation, namely, the death of their ally, the haughty and aspiring Dermot.

The Irish annalists in relating this event, show their abhorrence of the man, who, as they emphatically express it, "first shook the foundations of his country." They represent his death as the miraculous effect of divine wrath, poured upon his guilty head *at the intercession of every Irish saint*. His disease they say was strange and tremendous, and rendered him an odious and offensive spectacle of misery; they add, that he was deserted in extremity by every friend, and expired without any spiritual comforts, in a state of frightful impenitence.

The decease of Dermot was followed by an almost total defection of the Irish from earl Strongbow and his associates, one or two petty chiefs

were the only allies who now adhered to them in their distress when abandoned by their king, deprived of supplies, and threatened by the storm collecting around them. The period which Henry had assigned for their return was expired, Raymond could obtain no explicit answer, and on his return found earl Richard in the utmost dejection, cut off from all supplies, and already considerably straitened to maintain his army. The Irish chieftains were no strangers to his distress.

Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, whose sanctity gave weight to his representations, flew with patriotic ardour from province to province, entreating, exhorting, and commanding the chiefs and the people to seize the present opportunity, to take arms against a common enemy now worn out by their distress, and ready to sink for ever under the first vigorous assault. This politic and indefatigable prelate, not satisfied with thus endeavouring to raise the spirit of indignation and valour in his countrymen alone, proceeded in conjunction with Roderick to dispatch emissaries to the king of the island of Man, and to other northern princes, entreating their assistance against enemies who would not confine their ambitious attempts to Ireland, but doubtless would extend their usurpations even to those quarters which seemed the most remote from danger. The affecting and passionate representations of Laurence prevailed, the islanders consented to assist their neighbours, and soon blocked up the harbour of Dublin, while the confederated Irish took their several stations, so as to surround the city, in which were earl Richard and his associates. Even Laurence himself appeared in arms, commanding his particular troop, an instance of martial spirit not unusual to the prelates of those feudal times, but far from being always brought into

action in a cause so honourable as that in which it was exerted by Laurence. But their injudicious mode of warfare made this zeal nugatory; yet, during two months, in which they invested the city, they reduced the earl to the greatest difficulties. Oppressed by these individual difficulties, and the intelligence of dangers which threatened to overwhelm his associates Fitzstephens and Fitzgerald, Strongbow determined to enter into treaty with the Irish monarch Roderick. The prelate of Dublin it was naturally supposed would willingly become the mediator, and to him the application was made. With the fairest expressions of his readiness and solicitude to prevent the effusion of Christian blood he attended, to receive the overtures of the distressed warriors. Strongbow proposed to acknowledge Roderick as his sovereign, to hold the province of Leinster from the Irish monarch, provided he raised the siege, and accepted him as his vassal.

Laurence engaged to bear this proposal to his sovereign, and soon returned with an answer. He entered the council, with the dignified composure of a man conscious he was addressing those who must accept his terms; and with a firm tone and aspect declared, that the only terms that his monarch was disposed to grant were, that Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, with all the forts possessed by the Britons, should be immediately surrendered; and that the earl and all his forces should depart from Ireland by a day assigned, renouncing every claim. On these conditions they were to be spared; but the least reluctance or delay would determine the besiegers to storm the city. As the Britons might be considered absolutely in the power of the besiegers, these terms would appear neither severe nor insolent, but perfectly consistent with the spirit of the prelate, as

well as the judgment of an upright patriot. No revenge for past cruelties appears : they were assured of safety, allowed to depart unmolested, and required but to resign what they were supposed to have usurped and unwarrantably detained. But the justice of the terms appeared not to indigent and aspiring adventurers ; to them, the terms appeared insupportably mortifying : silence indicated the contending feelings of the chiefs, till one starting suddenly from his place, declared his resolution to die bravely, rather than to submit to the mercy of a barbarous enemy. The spark created a flame ; the spirit of desperate valour soon pervaded the council : all concurred in resting their fortune on one brave effort, which at the worst, would end in an honourable death, far more eligible than to perish with famine, or resign themselves to perhaps a perfidious enemy. In pursuance of this resolution, they assailed the quarter of the camp occupied by Roderick : such an assault, and at such a time, was utterly unexpected. The consequence was, the assailants found this quarter of their besiegers without discipline or order, careless and secure, and with little of military appearance. The assault was furious ; they bore down all before them, forced their way through the confused and dismayed crowds, and quickly spread consternation and blood through the whole camp. The Irish fled from the danger which the surprise had magnified ; and their monarch himself, who in perfect assurance and confidence had retired to a bath, escaped only by starting from his retirement half naked, and joining in the general route. The chieftains of the other stations heard the confusion, caught the panic, and while the victors continued the pursuit, broke up their camps precipitately. Thus did the Britons by a sudden ebullition of valorous

spirit, effect a revolution in their desperate situation ; not only dispersing their enemies, but gaining a sufficient store of provisions to maintain themselves for many months.

The dissensions and hostilities that ensued, were of course similar to those which had preceded this act of desperation : one only incident we shall relate, as marking the spirit of the times, and as involving an instance of sacerdotal depravity, too forcibly exemplifying the low state of morals among those whose influence was unbounded. Fitzstephens had defended himself bravely at Carig, having repeatedly foiled the attempts of the enemy. At length they had recourse to a stratagem to gain their revenge : a parley was desired ; it was granted ; and a party were admitted to confer with the brave Welchman. With the appearance of the utmost friendship, they assured him that earl Strongbow had suffered the punishment of his temerity ; that Roderick was in possession of Dublin, having put the Britons to the sword ; that he was now on his march to Wexford, to exterminate the remains of the adventurers, and particularly, breathing vengeance against Fitzstephens, who had first conducted them to Ireland ; that attached as they were to him above any of his associates, they announced this intelligence ; and the danger that awaited him. To assist him was impossible, but to favour his escape was an office which his kindness justly merited. They earnestly requested him to commit himself to their protection, solemnly promising to convey him and his garrison into Wales, before the arrival of Roderick should frustrate their amicable intentions. The noble-minded Fitzstephens doubted and hesitated ; his own safety entered not into calculation, but that of his friends was of infinite importance to his generous spirit.

His enemies marked the internal conflict : to remove his suspicions, they summoned two reverend bishops in their robes of ceremony, bearing the cross, the host, and several relics. Laying their hands on these, they swore a solemn oath, in confirmation of all that they had asserted. Fitzstephens, effectually deceived by this solemnity, committed himself and his friends into the hands of his mortal enemies, who, instead of conducting him to the sea, loaded him with chains, disarmed his followers, practising every wanton cruelty upon them that insolent barbarity could devise.

In the midst of this triumph of hypocrisy, intelligence is received that the victorious Britons are on the march to rescue their companions, and must soon arrive. Alarmed at this, they set fire to the town of Wexford, and retire with Fitzstephens, and such other of their prisoners who had survived their cruelty, to an island in the middle of the harbour, called Holy island.

In an ensuing engagement, a monk named Nicholas, serving in the British army, decided the fortune of the day in its favour, by killing with an arrow, the Irish leader O'Rian.

The period was now approaching, when these competitions for power and barbarous violences were to terminate. Henry, recovered from his consternation at the death of Becket, and having succeeded, at least in suspending the indignation of the offended Papacy, resolved no longer to defer his Irish expedition. He summoned earl Richard to his presence at Newnham, near Gloucester ; and expressed in strong terms his displeasure at his presumption and disobedience. His resentment, whether real or feigned, was however, soon allayed by the submissions of the cautious earl, who repeated his professions of allegiance, and yielded all his Irish acquisitions to the royal

disposal. Henry of Mountmorris attended with his nephew, and was his successful advocate with the high-spirited monarch. Strongbow, restored to favour, remained with his sovereign, in a royal progress he made on the borders of Wales, while the forces destined for the expedition, were assembling near Milford. Meantime, the Irish received the intelligence of the intended royal invasion in a state of helpless suspense, as if borne down and dispirited by their late contests. The fame of Henry's preparations do not appear to have produced any on their part, or to have effected any union among the chieftains. A sordid and selfish spirit seems to have pervaded them; and so little of loyalty, that they saw the power of their monarch on the point of dissolution, and saw it with apparent indifference. Some were even ready to meet the invader, and to submit before he had reached their shore. The men of Wexford in particular, who had possessed themselves of Fitzstephens in the perfidious way we have related, resolved to avert the probable consequences of their criminal conduct by the forwardness of their submissions. They sent deputies to Henry, entreating him to accept them as his vassals, ready to resign themselves, their lands, and possessions to his absolute disposal, and adding, that they had already endeavoured to prove their devotion, by seizing Fitzstephens as a traitor to his sovereign.

Henry received them with condescension, commended their zeal, and declared, he would soon enquire into, and redress the wrongs they had sustained. Thus he inspired them with favourable dispositions to his interests, and effectually rescued Fitzstephens from the immediate effects of their resentment and cruelty.

CHAPTER V.

Henry the Second invades Ireland—His assurances of protection—No resistance made—Strongbow does homage—Dermot M'Arthy, the first Monarch who submitted, and acknowledged the authority of Henry—Interview with the Archbishop of Cashel—Chiefs of Munster all graciously received, and sumptuously entertained—Fitzstephens liberated from his treacherous captors—Henry visits Dublin—The astonishment of the Irish at his splendid retinue—Henry receives the ready homage of the Chiefs—Treachery of O'Ruarc—Roderick's spirit aroused—He collects his forces, and determines to dispute the claims of Henry—His efforts vain—The Nobles attach themselves to Henry—Magnificent entertainment given by Henry—The Clergy favourable to his invasion—They swear fealty to him—He directs a Synod to be held at Cashel, to confer on the subjects recommended by the Pope—A rival Synod held in Connaught, by the authority of Roderick—Gelasius, Primate of Armagh—His simplicity and piety—Proceedings of Henry's Synod—Compliments to Henry—He convenes a Council at Lismore—The proceedings of it—The authority of the English Laws limited to a certain district, styled the Pale—Which was divided into Shires or Counties—A chief Governor appointed—His privileges and powers—Circumstances hasten the departure of Henry from Ireland—His jealousy of Strongbow, and measures to counteract his ambitious views—Mischievous consequences of his imperfect plans—He embarks for England—Proceeds to Normandy, and conciliates the Cardinals sent by the Pope on the affair of Becket—National failings of the Irish exemplified at this period—Tranquillity prevails some time—Nuptials of Strongbow's daughter at Fernes—Animosities arise—Domestic perplexities of Henry prevent his return to Ireland—He withdraws several of his garrisons from thence—Strongbow hastens to the aid of Henry in Normandy—The joy of the Irish at Henry's difficulties—Divisions and jealousies arise—Strongbow is sent to Ireland—Is accompanied by Raymond de Gros—Series of hostilities—Roderick attempts the recovery of his Throne, but not succeeding, sends Deputies to Henry with offers of submission—Treaty concluded—Jealousies of the English Lords counteract the beneficial consequences expected to flow from the treaty—Conduct of Raymond—National character injured by these

feuds—Religion of the period—Supreme power of the Papacy—Instance of the blind devotion paid to the Pope—Waldenses—Precedency of two Archbishops disputed—Knowledge is disseminated, and the Sciences studied—Encouraged by the European Monarchs—Learned Societies and Colleges established—As these increased, Episcopal and Monastic Schools declined—Corruption of the Monks—Complaints of the Irish Clergy of the depredations of the English—Causes and Consequences—Ordinance of Cardinal Vivian—Demoralised state of Ireland.

CENTURY THE TWELFTH.

As the expedition of Henry to Ireland may be regarded somewhat in the light of a crusade, or even a mission, if we advert to the sanction he sought and obtained, and as the circumstances we have detailed gave it too little of a military character to alter its ostensible nature, we may with propriety enter into the particulars which, although trivial in themselves, and merely entertaining, led to important national results both to the country and political interests of the invader, as well as the invaded.

Henry the Second, surnamed Fitz-Empress, having completed his preparations for his long-meditated Irish expedition, performed his solemn devotions in the church of St. David's, to implore the blessing of the Almighty upon an enterprize undertaken by the authority and in the cause of the church.

The solemnity being concluded, he embarked at Milford, attended by his reconciled noble, Earl Strongbow, William Fitz-Andelm, Humphrey de Bohun, Hugh de Lacy, Robert Fitz-Bernard, and other barons, four hundred knights, and about four thousand soldiers. His fleet, consisting of two hundred and forty ships, presented an awful and formidable object to those on whose coast they appeared. They entered the port of Water-

ford, and the forces were landed on the feast of St. Luke, in October 1172.

It was immediately published, that the design of the expedition was not to *conquer* but to *take possession* of a country granted by the pope, and to exercise a sovereignty which Henry affected to believe would be acknowledged and obeyed, without difficulty or reluctance. In fact, instead of resistance, acclamations of joy resounded on the arrival of the new sovereign; Earl Strongbow made a formal surrender of Waterford, and did homage to Henry for the principality of Leinster. The men of Wexford presented themselves with their prisoner, repeating their accusations, and imploring justice against their oppressor. Henry received them with affected commiseration, reproached Fitzstephens for his presumption, and remanded him to prison. The perfidious Irish exulted that they had so craftily eluded punishment, and involved their enemy in disgrace; and Fitzstephens, naturally believing his liberation was certain, was the less mortified at the result, as he well knew the price of his liberty, must be the relinquishment of his Irish acquisitions to the king.

- Dermot M'Arthy, prince of Desmond, was the first chieftain who submitted and acknowledged the sovereignty of Henry, and that on the very day after his arrival, resigning his city of Cork, stipulating to pay tribute for the rest of his territory, which, on these conditions, he was to enjoy without further restraint.

At Cashel, Henry had an interview with the archbishop, who was the first Irish prelate who appeared before him. The monarch professed to him his gracious intentions to the country, and his zeal for the regulation of its church.

All the chiefs of Munster followed, each seem-

ing to vie with the other in the alacrity of submission. All were graciously received, assurances of favour and protection given, while they were entertained with magnificence, gratified with presents, and dismissed with deep impressions of the grandeur and condescension of this powerful monarch, who, indeed, historians agree, possessed the most estimable and amiable social qualities; his "conversation being affable and entertaining, his elocution easy, persuasive, and ever at command."

Henry after these short excursions returned to Wexford, where as it was no longer necessary to dissemble, his barons were permitted to plead for Fitzstephens, who was at their instance liberated, and surrendered Wexford and its territory to the king, doing homage for the rest of his acquisitions, which he was allowed to retain, from Henry and his heirs. Having provided for the security of Munster, and stationed several garrisons, Henry proceeded to Dublin, to take possession in due form. He led his troops through Ossory in slow and stately progress. The rude inhabitants were struck with the splendour and magnificence of the royal army, and the chiefs had every facility of repairing to his camp, and acknowledging his sovereignty, which they were perfectly disposed to do; for their indifference to Roderick, and their terror at the English arms, determined them; without delay, to make their peace with Henry.

The lords of Leinster, indeed, deemed the royal service more honourable than a subjection to Strongbow, against which their feelings revolted, for his severity had rendered him obnoxious to the Irish, since the first period of his landing. As Henry, therefore, proceeded towards Dublin, he had ample occupation in receiving the homage

of his newly acquired vassals, among whom was even the intimate associate of Roderick himself. O'Ruarc of Breffney, who thus abandoned his former friend and ally, and became the voluntary vassal of the new sovereign, leaving to his fate his native monarch, him who had defended his interests, revenged his personal injuries, and loaded him with benefits! With how many instances of a similar ungrateful defection does history abound! In a state of abandonment by friends, at least those apparently so, a man thrown upon his own internal resources, and resting on his own energies, frequently acts with a spirit and dignity, of which he before appeared destitute. So it was with Roderick, who although sensible of the danger of meeting an English army, determined not at once to resign his title to the monarchy of Ireland. He collected his provincial troops, and intrenching himself on the banks of the Shannon, seemed resolved that his own territory should not become a part of the dominions of Henry.

Henry deputed Hugh de Lacy and William Fitz Andelm, to confer with Roderick, and either persuade or force him to submission. But the attempt was unavailing.

The Irish chieftains who had submitted, attended at the court of Henry. Equally proud and inexperienced, they were highly flattered with those conciliating expressions of favour, which flow with such ease from the lips of sovereigns and their courtiers, when necessary to advance their projects of ambition.

It was the feast of Christmas, a season of great and general festivity, for which Henry prepared with such magnificence and liberality as his present situation permitted, and such as was perfectly astonishing to his Irish followers. Crowds from all quarters flocked to Dublin, in the eagerness of surprise and admiration. "As

the city (adds Leland; from whom we draw the account) afforded no building capable of receiving the royal train, and the numerous assembly of guests, a temporary structure was raised with hurdles, after the Irish fashion, in the south-eastern suburbs, of large dimensions, and richly ornamented; and here the vassal lords of Ireland were admitted freely, and feasted sumptuously. Piles of silver, costly meats, generous wines, dress, music, and attendants, all conspired to possess them with a vulgar admiration of the invader. Dazzled by his grandeur, and intoxicated with his condescension, they forgot the baseness of their submission, and fancied themselves exalted to a degree of consequence, by being allied to such magnificence and splendour.”* We now proceed to relate what more immediately concerns the professed object of Henry’s invasion.

The clergy were, if possible, more ready and more abject in their submissions to the new monarch, than the lords and teparchs. This was naturally to be expected, for the Roman pontiffs, by the maxims of worldly wisdom which actuated them, had created great and continual contests and divisions in the church, which had obscured the lustre of religion, by a profane mixture of the inventions and superstitions of designing men,

* At this feast, the Irish princes and chieftains were perfectly astonished at the profusion and variety of provisions which they beheld, and were, with difficulty, prevailed upon by Henry to eat the flesh of cranes, a kind of food to which they had not been accustomed. In the remaining notices of these times, we meet with the names of several dishes, as *dollegront*, *manpi-*

gyrnun, *karumpie*, &c. the composition of which is now unknown.

At these great feasts, besides the ordinary drinks, ale, cyder, and mead, there were great quantities of wines of various kinds. Some of these, as *ypoenas*, *pyment*, and *claret*, were compounded of wine, honey, and spices of different kinds, in different proportions.

who shielded themselves under papal protection, and, of course, lost no opportunity of augmenting its power, and conciliating its favour. Doubtless apprised long before of the sanction Henry had received from their spiritual head, the numerous body of the Irish ecclesiastics waited upon Henry soon after his arrival, received him as sovereign lord of Ireland, and swore fealty to him and his heirs. Henry received from each prelate a charter of their respective submissions, which he transmitted immediately to Rome.

This is the statement made by the English historians, but it has been deemed not altogether correct. It is asserted upon good authority, that Henry having, as we have seen, been acknowledged, without resistance, as sovereign of the greatest part of the island, remaining unmolested by those who had not formally submitted, and prevented by the season from commencing hostilities, affected to display his zeal and solicitude to fulfil the conditions of his grant from Adrian, by turning his attention to the state of the Irish church, and to a reformation of its supposed abuses. For this professed purpose he directed a synod to be summoned and assembled at Cashel, to inquire into the prevailing state of morals and religion.

Gelasius, however, primate of Armagh, a man highly revered by his countrymen, did not attend, pleading his age and infirmities. But it would appear he had other reasons for declining to sanction, by his presence, any decrees of the synod, called in the name of the king, for he held another synod, convened soon after in Connaught by the authority of Roderick, probably in opposition to that summoned by Henry. Gelasius, from the sanctity of his character, had considerable influence, which he directed to the laudable purposes of regulating the ecclesiastical affairs in the western and northern parts of the island, and

in a sedulous attention to his sacerdotal duties. The Irish writers record, that this venerable prelate, in every progress through the kingdom, was constantly attended by a white cow, a particular favourite, which supplied him with milk, the chief sustenance of the pious and abstemious primate. The prelates of Ulster followed the example of their metropolitan: and although the bishop of Tuam, and Laurence of Dublin, who had so zealously contended against the English, obeyed the summons of Henry, candour may suppose they deemed their presence necessary to preserve the honour of their church from injurious representation, and by showing a readiness to correct what might be found wrong, to deprive the invader of the grand plea for extending his hostilities.

Christian, bishop of Lismore, presided as the pope's legate at the assembly. In this character, about twenty years antecedent, he had presided in the grand assembly of kings, prelates, and nobility, convened by order of Cardinal Papanon.

The Abbot of Buldwais, the archdeacon of Landaff, and some other of the English clergy, attended on the part of Henry, to forward the purposes of their royal master, and to observe the conduct of the Irish prelates. The synod was professed to be summoned, in direct obedience to the sovereign pontiff, in order to consult upon and devise remedies for ignorance and wickedness, to eradicate every fibre of depravity and iniquity, and to restore the purity of their ecclesiastical constitution, now contaminated and disgraced. Having thus boldly assumed that all these evils existed, the ordinances which were to answer the important purposes of correcting and removing them, we find to be, forbidding marriages within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity, directing that baptism should be publicly administered, youth instructed, tythes regularly paid, the lands of the

clergy exempted from secular exactions,* and that all true sons of the church should have power by will to distribute their effects in due proportion between their wives and children, and be decently interred in hallowed ground. This plan of reformation was unquestionably good and judicious, but it is obvious that it required not the interposition of the pope, nor obliged him in order to effect it, to transfer the sovereignty of Ireland to a foreign prince at the hazard of filling the island with contention and bloodshed. Nor did it demand the presence of the English monarch and a royal army to enforce ordinances which had been repeatedly enacted, and which the progress of knowledge could alone render effective. The imposing scene was closed by a declaration highly flattering to Henry, expressed in terms of abject servility, which, however they might please his vanity, his judgment must have rejected with disdain. It directs that the divine service of the church of Ireland shall in future be in all things conformable to that of the church of England. "For it is very meet and very just, that as Ireland hath by providence received a lord and king

* This ordinance was as follows; "All the ecclesiastical lands and possessions shall be entirely free from every exaction of secular men. And especially no petty kings or lords, or any potentates of Ireland, nor their children or families shall, for the future, exact maintenance or entertainment, according to custom, in the ecclesiastical territories, or presume to extort them by violence. And that detestable entertainment which is four times a year required by neigh-

bouring lords shall not, for the future, be demanded from the ecclesiastical towns. And moreover, in all cases of homicide committed by the laity, as often as they shall compound for the same with their adversaries, the clergy, who are their relations, shall pay nothing on this account; but as they had no part in the perpetration of the homicide, so shall they be free from contributing to the fine." In exempting the clergy, however, the laws were not abrogated, as will appear.

from England, so she may receive from the same a better form of living. For to his royal grandeur are both the church and realm of Ireland indebted for whatever they have hitherto obtained, either of the benefits of peace or the increase of religion. Since before his coming into Ireland, evils of various kinds had, from old times, gradually overspread the nation, which by his power and goodness are now abolished."

The reverend adulators seem to imply that Henry had been endued with a power of working miracles! Other acts of government exercised by Henry in Ireland, must be adverted to, as assisting to effect the grand object of reformation and civilization. He convened a council at Lismore, in which the laws of England were accepted and established by the sanction of a solemn oath. By this we are not to understand that the Irish abolished their own laws, and submitted entirely to the English. In fact, the old Irish polity was not only still to subsist, but was warranted, secured, and regulated by compact between Henry and his new subjects. They stipulated to become his tributaries and vassals; he was to protect them in the administration of their governments according to their own model. "They governed their people," saith Sir John Davies, "by the Brehon law, they made their own magistrates and officers, they pardoned and punished all malefactors within their several countries, they made warre and peace one with another, without controulment, and this they did not only during the raigne of Henry the Second, but afterwards in all times, even untill the raigne of Queen Elizabeth."*

* Brehon laws denote the general maxims or rules of law observed by the Brehons, and having force throughout the provinces of Ireland. By the statute of Kilkenny, made

The concessions of the Irish lords were uniformly made to Henry and his heirs ; and thus the kings of England were for ever to become paramount lords of the territories which these lords retained, and inheritors of those they resigned, which were inseparable from the crown annexed to the kingdom, and appendent on its dignity. Henry having acquired a considerable territory, and a number of subjects in the island, granted to them the English laws as stated, not, however, as a model by which they might govern themselves, and frame their own polity, but as they resigned their Irish acquisitions, and renewed their allegiance, he, on his part, consented and declared they should still be considered as the subjects of his realm, and still retain the advantages of that constitution, which as subjects they formerly enjoyed, and which he graciously declared, that they should retain, in the same capacity, without any diminution of their rights or any change in their relation to the king. "Hence," adds Leland, "the necessity of a new oath, whereby they were bound in due allegiance to Henry and his heirs, and to a faithful observance of the laws of his realm in their new settlements, thus made a part and member of this realm, inseparably connected and intimately consolidated with it." Thus, notwithstanding the nominal conquest of Ireland, the authority of the English was limited to a certain district, which received the designation of the *pale*, comprising Dublin, Kildare, Meath, with the cities of Waterford, Cork,

under Edward the Third, it is enacted that no English subject shall submit to a trial by the Brehon law on the penalty of high treason. Notwithstanding which, many were still under the necessity of being concluded by the Irish laws and customs, till the whole kingdom was settled on an English basis by James the First.

and Limerick, and the lands in their immediate vicinity. The benefit of these laws was granted and considered as an act of special grace, and not in general to all those who submitted, much less obtruded on any as an evidence of conquest.

For the better execution of these laws, Henry made a division of the districts subject to him into shires and counties. Sheriffs were appointed, itinerant judges, and other ministers of justice, officers of state, and every appendage of English government and English law. To complete the system, a chief governor or representative of the king was appointed to exercise the royal authority in the king's absence, and it was enacted in order to preserve the peace of the country, that should this chief governor die, the chancellor and other officers of state should be empowered with the consent of the nobles, to elect a successor, who was to exercise the full power and authority of this office until the royal pleasure could be known. Henry had ample leisure to form his Irish government, for the winter was remarkably severe and tempestuous, totally preventing any hostile attempts against those who had not submitted to his authority. The same cause had precluded all possibility of intelligence either from England or Normandy, till at length on his arrival at Wexford, after three months residence at Dublin, he was met by couriers, who brought the intelligence that Cardinals Albert and Theodine, delegated by the pope, had arrived in Normandy, to make inquiry respecting the death of Becket; that having remained there waiting Henry's return, till their patience was exhausted, they now peremptorily summoned him to appear without delay, if he would avert the sentence of excommunication, and preserve his dominions from a general interdict.

A circumstance so important to his interests and safety, obliged Henry to make hasty preparations for his departure. His ambition was mortified in being thus compelled to quit a country which afforded every prospect of advantage, but of which a very considerable part he had not even visited, still less reduced. But papal denunciations were of too much consequence to be disregarded. He was sensible he left an imperfect conquest, and his jealousy suggested that Strongbow waited only his absence to improve the advantages he had acquired, and assume the sovereignty.

In this perplexing situation, he took every means to conciliate the other English adventurers, and executed an important grant to Hugh de Lacy of all the territory of Meath, constituting him also his governor of Dublin, with a guard of twenty knights. Fitzstephens and Fitzgerald were made his coadjutors, with an equal train; and these, with other of the first adventurers, under the cover of an honourable appointment, were thus obliged to reside in Dublin, under the immediate inspection of Hugh de Lacy, who appears to have possessed the entire confidence of his sovereign. Lands were assigned for the maintenance of the knights and soldiers; a castle was directed to be built at Dublin; and, at the request of John de Courcy, a baron of distinguished genius and military abilities, the entire province of Ulster was granted to him, provided he could reduce it by force of arms.

Was this to do justly, and to love mercy? But such was the custom of the times, and certainly it was a method admirably calculated to make conquests without expense to the crown, but fraught with danger and oppression. To this system may be imputed the miseries which Ireland

felt for ages ; but, in all probability, had Henry not been interrupted in his engagement, the gradual subjection of the country to his power would have been attended by the most auspicious consequences.

The political state of nations at this period of history, rendered princes unable to maintain their conquests by regular armies. The only mode they had to make their work durable, and to establish their acquisitions, was by making settlements in the conquered country, dividing among them the possessions of the vanquished, giving them the authority, and thus gradually transforming the ancient occupiers into a new people. But it appears that the state of Ireland was so little inviting to the English, that only a few of desperate fortunes could be persuaded, from time to time, to transport themselves into it, who instead of reclaiming the inhabitants from their uncultivated manners, were gradually assimilated to them, degenerating from the customs of their own nation. Such is the opinion of our historian, Hume ; but when it is recollected that arbitrary military leaders were the first settlers, we are not to be surprised at the repugnance of the Irish, nor can we suppose much refinement was introduced. The same historian judiciously remarks : “ the natives, never wholly subdued, still retained their animosities against the conquerors ; their hatred was retaliated by the like injuries, and from these causes, during the course of four centuries, remained still savage and intractable.” “ Henry,” says an old historian, “ obliged Strongbow to return to Ireland, being likely for his own wealth, and assurance to procure all possible means of bridling and annoying the Irish ;” much is comprehended in this remark.

Henry having as effectually as the short time

permitted made his dispositions relative to his new conquest, or rather acquisitions, embarked at Wexford, on the feast of Easter. He landed in Pembrokeshire, and without delay proceeded on foot to the cathedral of St. David, where he performed his devotions with that appearance of piety and humility, which became an individual under the displeasure of the church. He proceeded on with all possible speed to Normandy, to meet the indignant cardinals. He had a conference with them at Savigny, but their first requisitions were so haughty and unreasonable, that he broke up the negotiations, declaring he would return to Ireland, where he had much to do, and leave them to execute their legantine commission as they might. The legates found they must lower their terms with the indignant and high-spirited Henry; another congress took place, terms less injurious and unreasonable were proposed, and Henry at length succeeded in concluding an accommodation. When these were adjusted, the king's submissions accepted, his absolution pronounced, Pope Alexander consented to seal the reconciliation, by confirming the grant of Ireland, made by his predecessor Adrian.

His brief recites the propriety of allowing the *just* acts of his predecessors, and the gifts made by the late pope to Henry of the dominion of Ireland, ratifying the same, with the reservation of Peter-pence, and on the former condition, of reforming the barbarous natives, and regulating their disordered church.*

* Peter-pence, so called from being collected on the festival of St. Peter in Vinculis. It was an ancient tax of a penny on each house, first granted, A. D. 725, by Ina, king of the West Saxons, for the establishment and support of an English college at

Rome, and afterwards extended, in 794, by Offa, over all Mercia and East Anglia. In process of time, it became a general and standing tax throughout all England, and though it was sometime applied to the support of the English college, according to

The national failings of the Irish, a sanguine credulity, mingled with personal pride and vanity, fickleness of purpose, and reckless impetuosity, with an impatience of suffering, inducing the belief that any change must be relief, were all exemplified at the period when they were, as we have seen partially, placed under the dominion of Henry.

As they became his vassals with apparent indifference and levity, they were as little solicitous or disposed to adhere to their submissions. Yet as the impressions in favour of their new sovereign, while fresh were lively, and the English settlers did not appear desirous of extending their acquisitions, every thing for a time wore the appearance of security and peace. Strongbow, in the confidence of it, retired to Fernes, which he possessed in right of his consort Eva; to celebrate the nuptials of his daughter with Robert de Quiny, one of the nobles who had engaged in the Irish war. This state of tranquillity was, however, soon interrupted, and aggressions seem to have begun soon after the celebration of these nuptials. Strongbow had created De Quiny constable and standard bearer of Leinster, which principality he enjoyed by homage to Henry. Being obliged to march into Offally, to exact his tribute from a refractory vassal, his forces on their return were attacked in the rear, and De Quiny, as standard bearer, with some others, fell in the fury of the first sudden assault. Subsequently to this, De Lacy was near falling a victim to the treachery and violence of O'Ruarc, the perfidious deserter of his friend and monarch. But he was, in his attack on De Lacy, himself killed, and being con-

the original design, the popes found means to appropriate it to themselves. It was confirmed by the laws of Canute,

Edward the Confessor, William the Conqueror, and never totally abolished till the reign of Henry VIII.

sidered as a rebel and a traitor, his head was sent to Henry.

Thus mutual animosities increased, complaints of oppression, treachery, injustice, and cruelty, were made by both parties, equally perhaps founded in truth, while the critical circumstances of the monarch, who alone could heal the dissensions and restore tranquillity, by the justice, firmness, and vigour of his government, gave opportunity and encouragement for all parties to avow and act upon their animosities. It was at this period that the unnatural combination of his sons involved Henry in all the miseries and difficulties of domestic strife, and produced the most dangerous factions among his nobles, raising the storm of rebellion and war in every quarter of his extensive dominions. To aid in forming a sufficient force to intimidate and resist his foes, the king found it necessary to withdraw several of his garrisons from Ireland, as well as to claim the attendance of some of his barons and commanders from thence. This summons was obeyed with such promptness and evident zeal by Earl Strongbow in particular, that Henry's jealousy of him was dispelled, he became convinced of his attached loyalty, and immediately entrusted him with the important government of Gisors. The intelligence of Henry's distress was received with joy by the Irish chieftains. On Earl Richard's departure, they openly disavowed their submissions, and denounced the vengeance of an injured people against their invaders.

Jealousies and divisions among the English lords prevented proper resistance to this turbulent spirit of the Irish, and the royal interests might have received irreparable injury, had not Henry despatched Earl Strongbow to take upon him the sole direction of Irish affairs, consenting

to the request of Richard that he should employ Raymond de Gros, who was much beloved by the army, as his assistant in the arduous duties of governing a violent and refractory people.

To quicken the zeal, and reward the services of the earl, Henry granted him the town of Wexford, and a fort erected at Wicklow, dismissing him with gracious assurances of favour.

A long series of hostilities, and all the attendant violences and horrors of civil war succeeded, during which Roderick endeavoured to recover dominion. But at length, having repeatedly experienced the instability and perfidy of his chieftains, and the inefficiency of a mere vassal army, he determined to save his own province from the depredations of a victorious enemy by a submission.

A proud consciousness of dignity, truly admirable, made him however resolve to treat only with the royal Henry, who had happily eluded the attempts of his continental enemies, and was at this period in England. After due notice given, Henry accordingly received at Windsor three deputies from Roderick, viz. Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, the abbot of St. Brander, and Master Laurence, as he is stiled, chancellor to the king of Connaught. The terms were easy, and the treaty was ratified in a grand council of prelates and temporal barons, among whom the archbishop of Dublin was one of the subscribing witnesses. As metropolitan of Leinster he was become an English subject, and was doubtless summoned on the occasion, as obliged by his oath to attend; and having been made a participator of the English legal rights, assisted by virtue of them in the king's great council. It is worthy of note, that Henry treated with Roderick not merely as a provincial prince, but as monarch of Ireland; for al-

though invested himself with the complete sovereignty, the marks of this sovereignty were no more than homage and tribute, in every other particular the regal rights of Roderick are left inviolate by the treaty; the English laws and government, only to be enforced within the English pale. At the same time that this treaty was concluded, Henry, as an evidence of his sovereignty, invested Augustin, an Irish ecclesiastic, with the bishopric of Waterford then vacant, and directed him to be consecrated by the archbishops of Dublin and Cashel.* This submission of Roderick, and recognition of Henry's sovereignty, were circumstances which certainly appeared to promise peace and tranquillity; but the disunion, jealousies, and envy of the English lords, counteracted all the beneficial consequences which might have been produced by the circumstances. Hervey of Mountmorris, the uncle of Strongbow, had long been the bitter enemy of Raymond, and either upon some just cause which does not appear; or urged by malice, he dispatched emissaries to Henry with unfavourable representations of Raymond's conduct. These representations, urged with plausible professions of loyalty by a baron of distinguished character high in the estimation of his sovereign, made the intended impression on the mind of the hasty Henry, whose jealousy was ever alive to the increasing power and success of his nobles in Ireland, more espe-

* That the Irish regarded this treaty as acknowledging the supremacy of Roderick, appears by an extract from their annals, anno 1175. Catholicus O'Dubhy came out of England from the empress's son, with the peace of Ireland and the

royal sovereignty of all Ireland to Rory O'Connor, and his own loigedh (province) to each provincial king of Ireland, and their rents to Rory. Ann. Lagen, M.S. (See Leland's History.)

cially as the delation was countenanced by recent tumultuous declarations of the army in favour of Raymond. The king, with his confidence thus shaken in the fidelity of Raymond, immediately sent four commissioners to Dublin, two of whom were to conduct the suspected noble to his presence, and two to remain in order to inspect the national affairs, watch the conduct of the chief governor Strongbow, who, from having solicited the assistance of Raymond, shared with him the royal suspicions.

Raymond, conscious of integrity, and suspecting the machinations of his secret enemy, declared his perfect readiness to obey the summons of his liege lord. He prepared without delay for his departure, but was detained by contrary winds. In the interval, Limerick was besieged by the Irish chief O'Brien of Thomond, a declared enemy to the English power. The garrison was in the utmost distress, and must inevitably have become a prey to the besieger, unless relieved without delay. Earl Strongbow, although labouring under severe indisposition, and deprived of his able commander, prepared for the relief of the besieged place, but the soldiers refused to march, unless under the command of their favourite general Raymond.

The king's commissioners were consulted, and urged by necessity, they consented that Raymond should conduct the expedition.

Thomond had abandoned the siege of Limerick, and entrenched himself in a defile through which the English were to pass; Raymond evinced his military talent on the occasion, O'Brien was driven from his entrenchments, and seeing no prospect of regaining his position, proposed an interview with the English general to offer terms of pacification. At the same time

Roderick, in pursuance of the recent treaty, repaired to Raymond, delivered his hostages, and took the oaths of fealty; so that this noble, at the instant of being under the displeasure of his sovereign, had the honour of receiving the submissions of the King of Connaught and the Prince of Thomond, who renewed his engagements to Henry and his heirs, and gave hostages as securities for his future allegiance. To this victory succeeded another, in which Raymond avenged the cause of an injured prince, and by the service obtained a valuable grant of land in the county of Kerry, which he enjoyed unmolested, and transmitted to his heirs. We have related these instances of anarchy, to prove that the national character must receive injury from such a state of lawless violence and constant excitement. Education must, under such circumstances, be necessarily neglected and disregarded: youths, instead of pursuing their studies, were engaged in the open conflicts of the field or the baser pursuit of private revenge; of course, personal vices and political crimes deformed the aspect of that society which, under a steady, wise, and judicious government, would have been rendered beautiful and peaceful.

The vital interests of religion and morals, are necessarily connected with those political; hence in the state of anarchy which now prevailed in Ireland, little attention was paid either to the sanctions of the one, or the obligations of the other.

The religion of the period, indeed, possessed little that could counteract the violence of human passion, or oppose the torrent of human depravity. The power of the papacy was supreme, and no public profession of the gospel which asserted independence of its domination was tolerated in

Europe, although there were several bold oppositions made to the errors of popery. The general spirit of the times we are cursorily reviewing was to weigh human merits and demerits in opposite balance, and hence determining the question of a man's salvation or destruction as resulting from the comparison of his good actions and his crimes. It is manifest what a fruitful harvest was derived by the priesthood from this system, as well as the total impossibility of receiving from it that consolation which is only to be drawn from the Christian doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, that doctrine which is "wholesome and so full of comfort," as is beautifully expressed by the pious Anselm.

Practical godliness appears to have been lost amongst a thousand senseless opinions and absurd ceremonies. Taught to believe that self inflicted pain is acceptable to the Deity, both as an atonement for crime and as a token of thankfulness, it is evident that such an opinion of the Almighty can offer no check to depravity, must tend to harden still more the unfeeling, and can prove no corrective to the thoughtless. About the period of which we now speak, the doctrine of transubstantiation was required by the court of Rome to be acknowledged by all men; this tended still more to separate men from the sublime simplicity of the gospel. Men fell down before the consecrated host, and worshipped it as God. Thus the sublimest mysteries of religion were corrupted by the exuberance of imagination, and the overwrought excitements of the latter were mistaken for the genuine fervours of the former, leaving the heart uncorrected and the passions unsubdued; while the noblest faculties of the soul were prostrated at the shrine of deception and crafty avarice.

The true love of God and our neighbour consti-

tuting true holiness, must necessarily be subverted when such human inventions are resorted to as principles of faith and rules of practice; and if ecclesiastical authority asserts its supremacy over the mild and comprehensive precepts and discipline of the gospel, it is equally evident that the minds of men must either be debased to the lowest standard, or be forever fluctuating in dangerous speculations and demoralizing subtilties.

Such was now the mighty power of the pope-dom, that the great ones of the earth, even kings and princes, as well as the community at large, bowed beneath its authority, and ministered to its arrogance. An instance of this is related by our church historian, Milner, as extracted from the annals of Baronius. "In 1162, two years after Waldo had begun to preach the gospel at Lyons, Lewis the Seventh of France, and Henry the Second of England on foot, holding the bridle of the horse of Pope Alexander the Third, walking one on one side of him, and the other on the other, conducted him to his habitation; exhibiting," adds Baronius, "a spectacle most grateful to God, to angels, and to men!"

The most cruel persecutions took place also at this time, to suppress what was styled the heresy of the Waldenses, and an enthusiastic ardour prevailed for a second crusade to the Holy Land. To engage Christians in this meritorious service, the Pope had recourse to various persuasions, every argument was employed to excite the ruling passions of the age, superstition, and jealousy of military honour. The regular clergy being exempted from the tax imposed upon the people on this occasion, the secular contended for the same immunity, on the plea that their duty only obliged them to pray for the success of the expedition.

To display the genius of the age we shall add to our detached notices the quarrel between two ecclesiastics, which sufficiently proves how little influence the mild spirit of the gospel had over the turbulent passions of those who were its ministers; we derive the account from Hume. Cardinal Haqueren being sent, 1176, as legate into Britain, summoned an assembly of the clergy at London, and as both the archbishops pretended to sit on his right hand, this question of precedence begat a controversy between them. The monks and retainers of archbishop Richard fell upon Roger in the presence of the cardinal and the synod, and so bruised him with blows that he was taken up half dead, and his life was with difficulty saved from their violence. The archbishop of Canterbury was obliged to pay *a large sum of money* to the legate, to suppress all complaints with regard to this enormity. The demon of avarice having thus entered the church, and commutation for offences being established, it is sufficiently obvious that the fountain thus polluted, the streams issuing from it must more or less partake of the pollution. Processions of saints, and granting indulgences, were the ingenious means resorted to by the priests to impose upon the people and to enrich themselves. Although the lives and manners of the clergy were not improved in this century, circumstances were however preparing the way; the pursuit of knowledge was great, and the sciences were studied with application, industry, and ardour.

This literary enthusiasm was encouraged and cherished by the influence and liberality of certain of the European monarchs, who could not but perceive the happy tendency of the sciences to soften the manners and thereby to afford an

additional support to civil government, as well as to ornament society. Hence were established in various places learned societies and colleges, in which were publicly taught all the liberal arts and sciences. The prodigious number of students who resorted to these seminaries, in process of time rendered their enlargement necessary, and the consequence was the establishment of universities in the succeeding age; in proportion as these arose into repute, the episcopal and monastic schools declined. The advantages attending these establishments were many and important; as they not only rendered knowledge more universal, by facilitating the means of instruction, but they were also the occasion of forming a new circle of sciences, better digested and more comprehensive than any taught heretofore.

Mosheim, speaking of the monks at this period, says "they gave themselves up to pleasure, and lived carelessly. The Cistercian or Bernardine monks surpassed all others in the external regularity of their lives and manners and a certain air of innocence and sanctity, which in others was degenerated or lost." The censures of this historian are generally too unqualified, but it is to be feared that his picture is too true a likeness in this instance, as it is fully substantiated by other historians.* The regular canons, an order

* Cistercians, this order was founded in the eleventh century, by St. Robert, a Benedictine. They became so powerful that they governed almost all Europe. Their discipline was severe; they abstained from flesh except in

sickness, also from fish, eggs, milk, and cheese, reposed upon straw beds in tunics and cowls, rose at midnight to prayers, and spent the day in labour, reading and prayer, and in all their exercises observed a continual silence. The habit of

between that of monks and secular clergy, are said to have employed themselves far more usefully than the monks; they kept public schools for the education of youth, and exercised a variety of ecclesiastical functions, which rendered them extremely useful to the church. Hence they rose greatly in general estimation, and in consequence incurred the jealousy of the monks, which soon degenerated into hatred; disputes of pre-eminence arose, and pretensions were carried so high that, as is usual, moderation and temper were lost in the contest. Amongst all these causes of spiritual jealousy and contending worldly interests, it is not surprising that genuine religion was obscured, and that its pure and sublime doctrines were disregarded or misunderstood. Our remarks have necessarily been general, because upon the immediate subject nothing peculiarly affecting, or relating to, the state of Irish clergy appears. The monkish annalists of Ireland indeed make affecting complaints of the destruction of churches by the English in their expeditions; with an asperity which we perhaps ought candidly to pardon, when we reflect upon the circumstances, they represent the new settlers as a race of savage barbarians, destitute of any principle of veneration for things sacred and holy, or even possessed of an aversion bordering on that of heathens to religious edifices.

Without attempting to justify the sacrilegious spirit here complained of, we may however venture to assert it had its origin in the pressing physical wants, rather than in the moral and reli-

the Cistercian monks was a white robe, in the nature of a cassock, with a black scapulary and hood; a woollen	girdle confined it. The nuns of the order wore a white tunic and black scapulary and girdle.
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gious insensibilities of our ancestors. Ireland had long been the unhappy scene of hostility and violence, it had therefore become a custom for the insecure inhabitants to deposit provisions and effects of greater value in the churches, where they were secure amidst all their domestic feuds, as in a kind of sanctuary, which it would be deemed the height of impiety to violate. The English settlers however had no scruple of the kind, and if they had, their necessities were too pressing not easily to stifle it when a supply of provisions was to be found. The churches therefore were always visited as a sure resource, the sacrilege was in many instances with a laudable spirit resisted, but this opposition, however justifiable, frequently occasioned a destruction far greater than would otherwise have occurred.

To prevent these destructive effects however, Cardinal Vivian, the pope's legate, procured an ordinance in a synod held in Dublin, that the English, when engaged in any expedition, should have free liberty to take provisions deposited in the churches provided they paid their just value. But this ordinance proved of little avail, so violent were the animosities and rooted the hatred of the Irish, that in order to deprive the invaders of resource they burnt down their own churches, as is expressed in their annals, "in spite of the foreigners," and did in fact reduce them by this means to the greatest distresses.

The local dissensions and continual contests which filled this unhappy country form the melancholy picture of the times, treachery and murder were revenged by similar horrid means, and outrages the most disgraceful marked each passing day. A spirit of irrational, unmanly superstition pervaded the land, debasing the mind so that all were nearly equally strangers to the nobler

virtues of humanity. Religion, in the form it then assumed, was altogether inefficient to restrain or to subdue the brutal passions of the people. "An effectual conquest and general subjection of the whole island to one reasonable and equitable government," observes Leland "must have proved a singular blessing to these unhappy people. But Providence was pleased to ordain that their enormities should continue much longer to prove their own severe punishment."

CHAPTER VI.

Raymond's military successes—Death of Strongbow—Raymond's measures—Obsequies of Strongbow—Harsh judgment of the Irish respecting him—Personal description of him—English council at Dublin exercise their delegated power of electing a chief governor—Raymond elected—Henry does not sanction the choice—Nominates William Fitz Andelm—His train—Administration of Fitz Andelm—Assumptions of the Pope, servility of Princes—Obnoxious measures of Fitz Andelm—The consequences—De Courcy, his precipitance—Complaints to Henry of Fitz Andelm—Hugh de Lacy, his administration—Prince John invested with the Lordship of Ireland—Remonstrances of the Chieftains—Jealousy of Henry in consequence of de Lacy's popularity—He is recalled to England—Conduct of de Lacy; he is reinvested with the government with Robert de Shrewsbury—Decease of Laurence O'Toole; his character—John Comyn succeeds him—Irish chiefs renounce their allegiance to Henry—State of the English Lords—Small force sent by Henry—Phillip Barry and Giraldus Cambrensis; their injudicious conduct—Pernicious instability of Henry—De Lacy recalled, and Philip of Worcester appointed; his vicious administration—Preparations of Prince John to exercise his authority—Henry declines the interference of the Pope on the occasion—John sent to Ireland with a splendid train—Irish Lords congratulate—Want of courtesy in Norman nobility; the consequences—Insurrection—Tragical death of de Lacy—De Courcy made Governor; his Administration—Death of Henry II.—His Conquest of Ireland rendered imperfect by circumstances—Richard Cœur de Lion neglects Ireland; engages in the Crusade—John assumes the title of Earl of Moreton and Lord of Ireland; grants various privileges—Appoints deputies to govern Ireland during the reign of Richard—His power but partially acknowledged—A Legate sent by the Pope to levy contributions for the Crusade—Hugh de Lacy made Governor—Jealousy of de Courcy—Irish avail themselves of it; their disunion favourable to the English—Hamo de Valois succeeds de Courcy—He invades the Ecclesiastical possessions to supply the necessities of his government—Remonstrances vain to effect redress—Conduct of Archbishop Comyn—Oppressions of Hamo—Death of Roderick O'Connor,

the last of the Irish monarchs, caused little sensation—Demise of Richard I.—Papal power in its zenith—Increased and supported by the promulgation of the Canon law, and other causes—Mendicant Orders, their popularity; their privileges—Resisted by the Regular Clergy—Dispensing power of the Popes—Jealousy of Sovereigns roused by their encroachments, and the foundations of the hierarchy thereby imperceptibly undermined—Constitution of Boniface the Eighth.

THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

It is necessary that we should revert to the situation of Raymond, who in the midst of his military success received the intelligence of the decease of Earl Strongbow. Well knowing the fickleness of the Irish; their real hatred of the foreign sway to which circumstances had induced them to submit; their readiness to revolt, and eagerness to embrace every plea of assuming arms; Raymond, as next in command, was aware how important it was to keep the event concealed till some measures of security could be fixed upon. To do this he held a secret consultation with some select friends, and took the necessary precautions to preserve the peace of the English provinces.

The obsequies of Earl Strongbow were performed under the direction of Raymond (who had married Basilica, the sister of the earl) and Archbishop Laurence, with all due solemnity and magnificence. In the true superstitious spirit of the times, the Irish clergy imputed the death of the earl to the divine vengeance judicially inflicted on his enormities, particularly those devastations of the churches which he had permitted. „The rigorous exertion of his power which Earl Richard was obliged to in order to support the interests of his sovereign, and what he considered his rightful inheritance, renders the harsh language of the Irish respecting him perfectly natural. “ Since the day of Tunesious, the savage Dane,”

say the annalists, "Ireland never knew so cruel and unrelenting an oppressor. Remorse and horror attended his dissolution, and in the awful moment of his departure he confessed he had been smitten by the saints of Ireland." We have however a fairer picture of the earl given us by Giraldus: "Earl Strongbow," says that historian, "was of a complexion somewhat sanguine and spotted, his eyes grey, his countenance feminine, his voice small, his neck slender, but in most other particulars he was well formed and tall; liberal and courtous in his manners, and what he could not gain by power, he frequently obtained by an insinuating address. In peace he was more disposed to obey than to govern; his state and authority were reserved for the camp, and here supported with the utmost dignity. He was diffident of his own judgment, cautious of proposing his own plans of operation, but in executing those of others undaunted and vigorous. In battle he was the standard on which the soldiers fixed their eyes, and by whose motions they were determined either to advance or to retreat. His temper was composed and uniform, not dejected by misfortune nor elated by success." By the decease of Strongbow the English council at Dublin had to exercise their delegated authority of electing a chief governor. The office was conferred on the gallant Raymond, and the king's commissioners concurred in the choice, believing that they best consulted and provided for the interests of their royal master by leaving them under the conduct of this favourite of the army.

The favourable report Henry received of Raymond from his appointed commissioners by no means allayed his jealousy of him. He therefore did not sanction their concurrence in conferring upon him the viceregal dignity, but determined

to nominate to that responsible situation, a nobleman allied to him by blood, and of approved allegiance. Accordingly William Fitz Andelm was sent to Ireland with a train of twenty knights. At the same time John de Courcy, Robert Fitzstephens, and Milo de Cogan were appointed, with each a suitable train, to attend the new governor. With these embarked Vivian, the pope's legate, and Nicholas Wallingford, an English ecclesiastic, with the brieve of Alexander, granted to Henry in confirmation of his title to the kingdom of Ireland. The new governor and suite landed at Wexford, where they were received by Raymond with due reverence. He resigned his state to Fitz Andelm with all inferior trusts held by virtue of his temporary commission.

Fitz Andelm began his administration by a steadily progress along the coast in order to inspect the forts and cities, and the ecclesiastics were also active in their peculiar vocation. An assembly of the Irish clergy was convened at Waterford, when the bull of Adrian and the confirmatory brieve of Alexander the Third were solemnly promulged; the king's title to the sovereign dominion of Ireland asserted and declared in form, with dreadful denunciations of the severest censures of the church against all those who should impeach the grant made by the holy see, or resist the sovereign authority of Henry, thus constituted *rightful* lord of Ireland. From the time of Gregory the Seventh, the pontiffs claimed the privilege of erecting kingdoms, and it was in many other instances, besides that of Ireland, assumed; even two years subsequent to the period we are now reviewing, viz. in 1179, Alexander conferred the title of king, with the ensigns of royalty, upon Alphonso, the first Duke of Portugal, who had previously rendered his province tributary to the

Romish see. Alphonso had been declared king of Portugal so long antecedent as 1136, in the midst of his exploits against the Moors, so that in fact Alexander did no more than confirm this title, although in an arrogant bull, he treats the prince as his vassal, and makes himself the donor of his royal dignity. It is hardly necessary to have given this instance of the encroaching nature of ambition, only as it evinces the advantage taken of the incautious concessions of princes, in sacrificing to future uncertain good their present independence, and by an impolitic submission to Rome to obtain some temporary aim. The consequences of this submission were, that all disputes between princes were to be referred to the pope as rightful lord, and if either party refused the reference, he was to be excommunicated and deposed. Every Christian sovereign was to assert the violated dignity of Rome, under pain of a similar forfeiture of his royal power. On every side the thunder of the papal resentment burst over the heads of the royal vassals; nations were subjected to a general interdict, during the existence of which the living were deprived of the offices and consolations of religion, and the dead remained unburied. The too general tyranny, and oppression, and cupidity of princes rendered this scheme of spiritual supremacy as onerous to the distressed, as it tended to shed lustre upon the head of the church, yet in some instances the interference was undoubtedly favourable to social order and human happiness.* Invested thus nominally at least with the

* As a specimen of the language of the papacy in asserting the supremacy, we cite a passage from a bull of Innocent III. a man possessing a great mind, though prone to sacrifice every object to ambition. An extensive learning in ecclesiastical law, a close observation of whatever was passing in the world, an unwearied diligence sustained his

executive power over Ireland, Henry was yet far from having adopted either judicious or adequate means to effect his political designs beneficially to his new subjects or profitably for himself. Nothing short of his personal administration of a well ordered political system, could have power to conciliate the invaded or to unite the invaders. The new governor possessed neither the ability nor the disposition to sustain a government, requiring a vigilant and martial spirit to organize the people into a tranquil and well ordered community.

A jealousy of the original adventurers, infused into him by his royal relative Henry, marked every act of Fitz Andelm, and he possessed little temper and policy, or too much haughtiness to conceal it. On the gallant Raymond especially, he looked with a malignant envy, even at the first interview, upon observing the numbers and appearance of his train. Destitute of true patriotic feeling, and of a generous sympathy with the mortified feelings of those he was delegated to govern, the sole object of his administration was mercenary, and to accomplish his object, he scrupled not to descend to craft, fraud, and circumvention. To conciliate the favour of the Irish chieftains, he had recourse to mean flattery, and affected courtesy; but so little judgment did he possess in the management of these courtly engines, that his insincerity was easily discovered even by the Irish, and by them despised, while

fearless ambition. Impetuous in temper, and with such advantages, he was formidable beyond all his predecessors, and, perhaps, beyond all his successors. "As the sun and the moon are placed in the firmament, (says Innocent,) the greater as the light of the day,

and the lesser of the night, thus are the two powers in the church; the pontifical, which, as having the charge of soul, is the greater, and the royal, which is the less, and to which the bodies of men only are entrusted."

he rendered himself in various ways detestable to his own countrymen. Unhappy, the people subjected to the government of such an individual, equally corrupt in manners and rapacious in principle. It is obvious, that the reformation which was the ostensible reason of invasion, was not likely to be effected under such an inauspicious sway. It was impossible that the advantages of moral civilization could result from corrupt official despotism, and a state of society destitute of those ties and combinations which unite man to man in consistent and strong cohesion. The English lords who had formed the first settlements in the country could ill brook the unjust encroachments and the haughty assuming manners of Fitz Andelm and his dependants. Among the first who betrayed their impatience, was the bold and enterprising John de Courcy. Availing himself of the discontents of the army, he prevailed upon a few of the most adventurous to assert their independence, and to penetrate into parts of the country not yet visited by the English. In this expedition is involved an instance of superstition in perfect consistency with the generally prevailing spirit, also one of laudable interference of a Christian dignitary to arrest the violence of a desperate chief. Several circumstances favoured the design of De Courcy, and his own superstition confirmed his hopes of conquest. He had discovered in the prophecies of Merlin, that the acquisition of Ulster was reserved for his valour, and his Irish adherents supplied him with another prophet, who declared that Down (the object of his enterprise) was to be subdued by a stranger mounted on a white horse, with a shield charged with painted birds. De Courcy accoutred himself according to this description, and marched in full

confidence to his destined conquest.* This incursion involved the country in devastation and distress. The prince of Uloah had recourse, in the emergency, to the interposition of Vivian the legate, who, in his spiritual progress through the island, now chanced to reside at Down. He instantly addressed himself to the fiery De Courcy, boldly represented to him the injustice of his conduct, reminded him of the royal treaty, and by every argument his religion so abundantly supplied, intreated the haughty baron to spare an unoffending people, who had a claim upon his protection rather than to become the victims of his violent ambition. But the Christian arguments of Vivian made no impression upon the indurated heart nor prevailed over the impetuous passions of De Courcy, who continued his hostilities undismayed by the probable consequences which his disregard of the monitions of the pope's representative might provoke. It does not appear, however, that any fulminations were issued against him. But Vivian, indignant at the contempt shown to his exhortations, and affected by the sufferings of the people, exercised his spiritual influence to urge the oppressed to take up arms and resist the incursions of an unjust enemy. Thus was he provoked by circumstances to depart from the original principal object of his legantine commission, which was to exercise that influence to attach the Irish to the interests of Henry. A

* Downpatrick, in the county of Down, is one of the most ancient towns in Ireland. The bishopric was erected in the fifth century by St. Patrick, is now united with that of Connor. Near the town, on the ascent of a hill, are the ruins

of the old cathedral, remarkable for the tomb of the founder, and about a mile distant is St. Patrick's well, which is frequented either to drink the water, or to perform a penance enjoined by the priests.

tumultuary army of considerable force was accordingly collected to dispossess the foreigners, an action ensued, but discipline prevailed over numerical force, De Courcy, by the overthrow of his opponents made good his conquest. A second effort was made by the Irish, defeat again succeeded, and several brave chieftains fell in the noblest of causes, that of maintaining their native independence.

A spirit of enterprise, awakened by courtly dissension, now seized others of the English leaders, and the domestic feuds of the Irish gave them ample field for the exercise of their military talents. It cannot be a subject of surprise, that in the midst of this anti-social chaos, every act of the delegated government served but to render the principles of the system more jarring and discordant, and less likely to effect those great objects, which candour obliges us to suppose Henry was sincere in his wish to accomplish. In fact, complaints so strong and serious were made to him respecting the inefficient and corrupt government of his relative Fitz Andelm, that Henry resolved to remove him.

Historians agree with the Irish monks (whose single testimony might be suspected of prejudice) in condemning the conduct of this governor. The monks attribute but one commendable act to him during the period of his administration, how far it may serve to redeem his character from obloquy, we pretend not to pronounce. The act thus distinguished, was the removal of what the monks call the staff of Jesus, a relique held in the highest estimation, from the cathedral of Armagh to that of Dublin. The peculiar reason for this removal deemed so meritorious, is not distinctly explained; perhaps, it might be to secure it from martial violation, as Ulster was the seat of war. One

other act of Fitz Andelm, however, the clerical historians have omitted, that of founding and endowing the monastery of St. Thomas the Martyr in the western suburbs of Dublin, still known by the name of Donore. It was thus titled, from the recently canonized archbishop of Canterbury, and Henry, with a zeal or affected reverence for the memory of a man who had caused him so much trouble, immediately confirmed the endowment of Fitz Andelm by his own royal charter. The care of reliques and the founding of monasteries were, however, quite insufficient exercises for a governor of Ireland, requiring the full action of every political talent, every intellectual energy, and every moral principle, to reduce chaos to order, and to connect the dissevered links of the social system into a firm and beautiful chain. Such an individual was found in Hugh de Lacy, who was appointed by the sovereign will. We detail not the wise and salutary regulations he made, but content ourselves with saying, that he acted upon the principles of a just and generous spirited administration. Henry also, to assist in some regulations he projected in the kingdom, summoned some of the principal lords to attend him in England; at the same time, he made a formal and solemn appointment of his son John to the lordship of Ireland. He also granted to several of the barons, territory as a reward for their faithful services, to be held by feudal tenure of himself and his son John. By these grants Henry certainly invaded the rights of Roderick, which he had stipulated to preserve, but this violation of equity and good faith was one of the poisonous fruits of that debased religion which substituted outward formalities for inward principles; whilst the doctrine that attention to saints, and a due liberality to their servants, could save

the most culpable and even the most atrocious, could not fail to encourage crime and pervert the moral sense. But although Henry thus disregarded his engagements, the Irish chiefs were not prepared to yield to his demand, territories, the quiet possession of which they had not forfeited by any act of rebellion or disregard of the conditions upon which they were retained. Upon the claim of the English lords, remonstrances of intrusion were therefore naturally made; hostilities succeeded, but were suspended by a treaty by which each party conceded a portion of their rights, and tranquillity was in a degree restored. In the meantime, the judicious Hugh de Lacy continued to administer justice with impartiality and lenity, setting an example of politic union between the contending parties, by espousing the daughter of Roderick O'Connor. The influence and government of such a mind, must have proved beneficial, but Henry, with all the high qualities he possessed, was frequently led by his jealousy of power and quick feeling, into great inconsistencies, and measures injurious to his interests as well as dishonourable to the nobleness of his character.

The popularity of De Lacy had produced its invariable consequence, the envy and malignity of narrow minds. The doubts and suspicions infused into the mind of Henry by these insidious slanderers, were received with a readiness which indicated the proneness of his disposition to jealousy, and how little his feelings were under the controul of his judgment. Urged by feelings so unworthy of his high station and good sense, he hastily recalled De Lacy to England, and John, constable of Cheshire, and Richard de Peach, bishop of Coventry, were appointed to govern a country to which they were entire strangers, and

who were otherwise but imperfectly qualified for a trust so important.

This error in the political judgment of Henry must inevitably have been prejudicial to his interests as well as unhappy in its consequences to Ireland, had not the better feelings of the monarch been roused by the candour of Hugh de Lacy. The proofs he gave of his zeal and loyalty, dissipated in a moment the too readily formed suspicions of his royal master, who, with a facility equal to that which produced his removal, now remanded De Lacy to his government. Lacy, however, requested that Robert de Shrewsbury, a domestic chaplain to the king, and in whom he placed the greatest confidence, should attend him as co-adjutor, or rather, as the inspector of his actions, that the king might be assured that his interests were properly regarded, and the designs of idle or malignant rumour might be frustrated. Though the incursions of John de Courcy, and those of the turbulent Irish lords, still disturbed the peace and devastated the country, they rather favoured than prevented the immediate object of De Lacy's government, that of improving and defending the province of Leinster, and the effects of his wise and strenuous administration were felt and acknowledged as most honourable to him. This immediate period (1181) is marked by the decease of Laurence O'Toole, the prelate of Dublin. He was held in the highest estimation by his countrymen, and although his political conduct is less dwelt upon than the numerous miracles he performed, yet sufficient is detailed by the Irish historians to prove that he took a considerable part in those contests, which attended the first establishment of the English in his country, of this we have already cited one instance to which others if necessary might be added. The father

of Laurence was a chieftain of consequence in Leinster, and while Laurence was very young had been obliged to deliver him to king Dermot, as a hostage, and by that monarch he was assigned to the care and custody of the Abbot of Glendalough. In this deep solitude, surrounded by the awful and grand in nature, his mind rose into vigour, and he acquired a high devotional and retired taste; of course a monastic life was the choice of his heart. The virtues he displayed in seclusion, were however so superior, that he was drawn from the quiet scene where they were practised, in order to be placed in the high station for which his abilities fitted him. In the fulfilment of its duties, the sanctity of his manners, and the nobility of his birth, engaged the attention and respect of all the higher orders of his countrymen, while his comprehensive mind and shining abilities necessarily gave weight to his opinions, and involved him in the political affairs of his distressed country. In him we see the pious ecclesiastic employing his spiritual influence, not for his own aggrandizement but for the good of his country, a pure patriotism animated his soul, possessing a full conviction that to preserve a state from dilapidation and decay, each individual must support his own virtue in order to give strength and consistency to that of the community of which he forms a part. The temperance and purity of Laurence, was unmingled with austerity, they were softened by a boundless hospitality, dispensed with that free good will, which evidenced it was not a vain display which he sought, but the genuine emanation of a spirit that delighted to do good, and to contribute to the innocent gratification of others. His guests, while entertained with liberality, saw the pre-

late himself adhering to his monastic rules of abstinence and self-denial, yet without affectation or severity. The influence he thus justly acquired over the minds of his countrymen, he not only employed in the wise regulation of his church, and governing his clergy with the strictest though affectionate discipline, but in that beautiful exercise of christian charity, the moderating and composing the dissensions of those irritable chieftains whose barbarous ambition spread anarchy and misery through their country. His patriotic fervour rendered his opposition to the English interest strenuous and determined as long as he thought there was any prospect of success, and even after he found it necessary to submit to Henry, his attachment to his own country remained undiminished; the warmth of his patriotism unchilled. Deeply affected with the arbitrary and corrupt conduct of some of the English governors, he resorted to England purposely to lay before Henry the unprovoked injuries and oppressions his unhappy countrymen sustained. On this occasion Laurence was, by a singular incident, in imminent danger of losing his life. He was officiating in the cathedral of Canterbury, when a man of unsound mind, struck suddenly by the circumstances of the place, the appearance and occupation of the prelate, conceived the thought of honouring him with the crown of martyrdom, and immediately assaulted the astonished Laurence with the utmost violence, nor was he rescued from the attack of the maniac till he had received a desperate wound in the head. The unhappy wretch was seized, and would have suffered capitally for this act of madness had not the prelate interceded and prevailed upon the king to pardon him. Whilst Laurence was in England he was summoned to

the council of Lateran, in the year 1179, and by Henry's permission he obeyed the mandate. It is asserted that he was bound by a solemn oath not to attempt any thing on this occasion, derogatory to the king's dignity and authority, but by this he did not consider himself bound to silence, respecting the injustice of the English governors in Ireland, and accordingly he made the most powerful and affecting representations of the wrongs and calamities of his countrymen, and is stated to have pleaded so effectually, that some decrees were made in favour of the Irish nation; and at the same time he procured a confirmation from Pope Alexander, of all his rights and possessions to him and his successors by a brief.

This zeal for the interests of his see and his country was, however, so displeasing to Henry, that he sent the prelate a mandate, forbidding him to return to his pastoral charge; so that the estimable Laurence died an exile in Normandy. This exercise of royal power appears as injudicious as cruel, when we reflect upon the noble and patriotic spirit of Laurence, and the salutary influence of his high character among his countrymen. In him Roderick lost not only a wise counsellor, and faithful friend, but also an active and diligent minister, whose acts were tempered with the moderation befitting his ecclesiastical character, and free from the treachery, chicane, and art, which disgraced too many of his countrymen.

Laurence was succeeded in his episcopacy by John Comyn, an Englishman, whom Henry nominated to the clergy of Dublin, and whose election was ratified by Pope Lucien, with a confirmation of the grants made by Alexander, of the rights and possessions of the see. This prelate was chosen by Henry as being attached to his

interests, and as one whose character promised vigour and abilities no less in temporal affairs, than in those of his spiritual function. Indeed, the king found it necessary to send men of abilities both in war and politics, in order to repair the losses which the continual state of warfare had caused amongst some of the bravest and most distinguished of the original settlers; who, when they began to have a prospect of peaceable repose, and confidence with the Irish appeared increasing, were attacked in the midst of their security, in the most treacherous manner, the chiefs with characteristic levity renouncing allegiance to Henry, and spreading war and devastation in attempts to expel the foreigners. The spirit which had upheld the warriors in their youth, grief, disappointment, and age had nearly quenched. Fitzstephens' spirit had been subdued by the death of a beloved son; and the violent attack of the Irish proved too heavy for his years and his debilitated mind—the once ardent and fearless veteran became an unconscious maniac! Hervey of Mountmorris, turning his view from the unsatisfying acquisitions of ambition, embraced a religious life, and immured himself in a monastery, at that time the usual retreat of disappointment and adversity.

To supply the losses sustained, Henry sent a small force into Ireland, which was shortly followed by a reinforcement, under the command of the brave Philip Barry. Girald Barry, an ecclesiastic, better known by the name of Giraldus Cambrensis, attended his brother Philip in this expedition. Henry had such a reliance on the abilities of this ecclesiastic, that he had intrusted to him the education of his son John, and his reason for uniting him to the expedition was, that he might give such information, and aid in such dispositions, as might fur-

ther the interests of the prince destined to assume the reins of government in Ireland. For the same reason, the Archbishop was commanded to repair to his diocese. But whatever might be the abilities of these men, and however qualified Henry might think them to effect his purposes, they appear to have entered upon their new and important scene of action, with ideas and sentiments ill calculated to conciliate the proud people with whom they were to associate, and little likely to gain that influence over their affections and opinions, which alone could reconcile them to foreign administration. A sovereign contempt of those with whom they condescended to converse, and a vain display of their own superiority, marked the demeanour of the Englishmen, equally proving their contracted minds and selfish hearts. Few are the minds that do not spurn at such assumptions, and who are not led to betray the mortification it produces, by acrimony, while prejudices are held with an increased tenacity, in proportion as they are attacked with invidious observations, or insulting contempt. Thus while Cambrensis endeavoured to inform himself from the Irish clergy of the state of their ecclesiastical constitution, he could not refrain, in the vanity of his mind, from drawing mortifying comparisons. For instance, the Irish naturally recorded with pious veneration the illustrious actions of those holy men, whose piety and learning had adorned the church of Ireland, and in their zeal for its honour they were not silent respecting the long catalogue of saints it had produced. "Saints!" said Girald, with a tone of the utmost self-sufficiency, "yes, you have your saints, but where are your martyrs? I cannot find one Irish martyr in your calendar." "Alas!" replied the prelate of Cashel, "it must be acknowledged

that as yet our people have not learned such enormous guilt as to murder God's servants ; but now the Englishmen have settled in our island, and that Henry is our sovereign, we may soon expect enough of martyrs to take away this reproach from our church." This severe, though indirect allusion to the murder of Becket, proved the bitter feeling of the speaker, as did the readiness of the application his acuteness and ability. Contemptible as altercations of this sort may appear, they had a powerful and pernicious influence in keeping alive animosities, and fomenting divisions between two nations, whose mutual interests could only be promoted by close and friendly union. Arrogance naturally begets hatred, and recrimination will follow invective. But lamentable indeed is it when this is found among the professors of a religion of peace, and when those meetings wherein the good of others should be dispassionately discussed, are dishonoured by language of mutual reproach ; yet such was the case of the synodical meetings of Ireland, to the prejudice of the interests of religion and morality.

Perhaps, had Henry studied the means most likely to disgust and irritate the Irish, he could not more effectually have done it, than he did by his culpable and extraordinary instability in respect to the individuals chosen as chief governors. Listening once more to the artful suggestions of those, who infused doubts of the official integrity of Hugh de Lacy, he recalled him from his government, and appointed as his successor Philip of Worcester, a man whose sole object was to enrich himself, even if it were by plunder and oppression. The first act of his administration was one of fraud and injustice. He enforced his exactions with the utmost rigour, and to the great

scandal of religion, and of Armagh as a seat of piety, he passed there six days in mid-lent, feasting and revelling, extorting money from the clergy with unrelenting severity, and deaf to their plea, that by the articles of the synod of Cashel they were exempt from military exactions. Their only resource was to denounce the judgments of heaven against their ravager. And when he was, at his departure, seized with a sudden fit of sickness, they were encouraged to hope their supplications were heard, and that the object of their hatred was also the object of the Divine wrath ; and this ignorant superstition was strengthened by the incident of a fire breaking out in the quarters of one of his attendants, which was instantly converted into a miraculous punishment for the sacrilege of Philip, in robbing a religious house of its furnace.

1385.—The exercise of his oppressive power, was, however, not of long continuance. Prince John prepared to exercise that authority in Ireland, conferred upon him by his royal father. He received knighthood from Henry's hand, and a splendid train was appointed to attend him to the seat of government. A legate was sent from Rome to wait on the prince, and to perform the ceremony of his coronation in Ireland. This representative of the holy pontiff presented the young prince with a curious diadem of peacock's feathers, hallowed by the benediction of the sovereign pontiff. The jealousy of Henry, however, betrayed itself on this occasion. He declined the interference of the pope, and with a caution which the unnatural combination and conduct of his other children justified, sent John to his government without additional title, or any ceremonial, but attended with a considerable military force, and a magnificent train of young

and gallant Normans. These were followed by a number of Englishmen, who were induced to follow in the young prince's train, to a country which, although unknown to them, they concluded possessed some advantages by which they might better their condition, having dissipated their fortunes by extravagance and profligacy. This gay train could assimilate little with the hardy Welshmen, who were the original settlers, and who attended on the young prince, to do him homage on his arrival.

Glanville, an eminent lawyer, had been appointed by the king to assist and direct his son. Several ecclesiastics also attended him, and Cambrensis, who had acquired some knowledge of the country, was in attendance on his pupil. The Irish chieftains reconciled to submission by the dignity of John's birth and station, felt their refractory spirits softened, and determined to do homage to the king's son. The native lords of Leinster, who had ever been first, hastened to Waterford to congratulate the arrival of the new prince; but neither the Prince, or his Norman courtiers, had sufficient judgment, discretion, or experience, to treat them with due attention and respect. The beautiful virtue of courtesy, the elements of which are modesty, a generous sympathy in the feelings of, and respect for others, was unknown to the youthful and glittering circle which surrounded the English prince. To them, the uncouth dress, and unfashionable figures of the Irish chieftains, appeared proper and fair objects of contempt and derision, and these feelings were betrayed generally and insultingly. Spirited and proud, tenacious of their state, and of all men most impatient of the slightest mark of contempt, with tempers rendered irritable by oppression, the Irish lords could not but keenly

feel the ill-timed ridicule of the new comers, who, had they possessed either understanding or policy, might have easily conciliated the unfriendly, and, in all probability, reduced the disobedient, by less objectionable methods than by arms. As it was, however, the Leinster chiefs quitted the court, fired with indignation, and resolved on revenge. They repaired to other chiefs, related their insulting reception, and all the probable consequences of yielding to a people whom no concessions could induce to depart from a system of contempt and outrage. The flame of proud resentment was readily caught, for the materials were combustible to which the spark was applied. The chiefs agreed, that instead of proceeding to do homage to the prince, they would waive every private animosity, and unite to assert their independency, and exert their utmost combined endeavours to free their country from the insulting and imperious foreigners.

The storm of war was on all sides collecting; but John indulged in idle pomp and dissolute excesses. The clergy solicited for grants to the church, while soldiers urged the necessity of defence. The religious house of Thomas the Martyr, founded by Fitz Andelm, received additional donations. But the tumult of insurrection soon reached the prince and his luxurious dependents. Hostility and disaster marked each succeeding hour. The land was laid waste, carnage and commotion deluged and shook the unhappy country; and to add to the horror of the time, the improvident John had lavished the sums appointed to pay his army, so that a dreadful scarcity threatened to follow close upon profuseness, luxury, and war.

Eight months of disorder and misery had

elapsed before Henry became fully acquainted with the wretched situation of Ireland, and the weak and wanton administration of his son, whom he determined to recall. Unfortunately, he was about this period deprived of the valuable services of Hugh de Lacy. The circumstances attending the death of this noble are so affecting, and so strongly indicate the blind superstition which pervaded society, that we shall relate them in the words of an historical writer, of whose highly interesting work we have amply availed ourselves in collecting illustrations of our subject.

In the recent predatory incursions into Meath, the land of De Lacy had received considerable damage, which upon the restoration of some tranquillity, he was indefatigable in repairing. Earnestly intent upon accomplishing these important works, he was accustomed to superintend his labourers, among whom were many of his Irish tenants. He would also frequently, for their encouragement, himself unite in their labours. He was proceeding to erect a small fort at Denworth, upon the site of a venerable abbey. The Irish were shocked at such profanation of this ancient seat of devotion, a residence of one of their most renowned saints; and the hatred of their invader, inflamed by this superstition, operated upon one of the workmen even to a degree of frenzy. He seized the moment when De Lacy was employed in the trenches, and as he stooped down to receive his orders, drew out his battle-axe, which he had concealed under his mantle, and with one vigorous blow smote off the head of the unsuspecting and unguarded De Lacy. The assassin was too much favoured by his own countrymen not to escape. The flame of insurrection was instantly rekindled in Meath. The news of Lacy's death was eagerly spread,

and joyfully received. The clergy represented it as an act of vengeance executed by the holy Columbk-kill on the sacrilegious usurper of his abbey and ravager of Irish churches. Thus were the people taught that the act of an assassin was meritorious, and the hostile purposes of the Irish insurgents were confirmed and encouraged. Thus had religion lost almost every quality which renders it conducive to the good of society; it is not, therefore, a subject of surprise, that the restrictions of human law were contemned and insulted, and that violence, rapine, and crime desolated and disgraced the country. In this critical situation of affairs, the rude and inflexible valour of John de Courcy, appeared to Henry best suited for the government, he was therefore entrusted with it, and John, with his frivolous train, returned to England, well pleased to leave a country of turbulence and danger. De Courcy entered upon his martial administration with indefatigable vigour, and, in conjunction with the son of the murdered De Lacy, took severe vengeance for the act. His forces were in continual action, and though confined to defensive operations, he succeeded in preserving from extinction that power whose extirpation had been threatened. The native Irish act from sudden fits of passion and violence, but the ebullition quickly passes off. This characteristic disposition was manifested at the period we now speak of. Factions and local feuds consumed that energy all had vowed to exert against the common foe; their jealousy of the English progress diminished, and in the rage of domestic jealousy and revenge, the weaker party not unfrequently sought assistance in the English settlements. To govern a people whose national pride was so strong, whose dispositions were so versatile, and temper so irritable,

was certainly no easy task. De Courcy might have been enabled by this fluctuating spirit of the Irish to have maintained his government; but he was of a temper too bold and enterprising to be contented with acting upon the defensive; he resolved, therefore, to make an attempt upon the disordered province of Connaught, but the result was not honourable to his arms, he was compelled to retreat, the merit of which could not be properly appreciated by his tumultuary enemy, therefore they exulted in having driven their foe from the province.

Amidst the anarchy and slaughter in which a considerable part of the island was involved by the fierce and unnatural ambition of the chieftains, John de Courcy was enabled to maintain his authority, and to support the English acquisitions, though he failed to extend them either by reconciling the sullen, or subduing the more bold and open contemners of the English power. Such was the state of Ireland, when Henry the Second paid the debt of nature, 1189. Though ranking among the first characters of history, the delineation of the distinguishing traits which rendered this monarch such, enters not into the plan of this work, only so far as relates to his Irish expedition; for, from the cursory view we have given, it evidently cannot be termed a conquest.

When we reflect upon the general character of Henry, and contemplate the vigorous mind and correct judgment which had induced him to repress the clerical usurpations of his time, and to penetrate into the mischief of that superstition which held society in subjection; we cannot suppose that in his reference to the pope respecting Ireland, he was actuated by any other motive than to give the enterprise some colour of fair pretence, and to reconcile to the vulgar, the pre-

judiced, and the superstitious, an extension of power, which would otherwise appear in their estimation, base and unwarrantable.

Had Ireland enjoyed the personal benefits of his sway, the greatest good might have resulted, but the unfortunate incidents of his reign, permitted not Henry to make that most important of all conquests, that of the affections of his new subjects, and through that kindly medium to have influenced their opinions, and regulated their stormy and irascible passions. The measures Henry was compelled to pursue were those of necessity; they were certainly not always guided by good policy, that being too often forgotten in the irritable moments of his jealousy, of the growing power of his vassals, a jealousy, perhaps, increased, if not actually produced by the experience of the infidelity and ingratitude of men, imposing upon, and outraging, as they too often do, the finest sensibilities of our nature. Be this as it may, the plans pursued, we have seen, were both injudicious and totally insufficient to effect what we must, in common justice to Henry suppose were his intentions, which must certainly have been to obtain something of greater value than a sovereignty of mere formal homage and inconsiderable tribute.

Richard, surnamed Cœur de Lion, succeeded to the English throne without opposition, but imbued with a large share of the prevailing passions of the times, a romantic desire for strange adventures, and an excess of zeal for the external rites of religion, Richard seemed to think the principal design of his government must be the attempt to recover the Holy Land from the infidels, and he united with the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Philip Augustus of France, in the third and last crusade. In the enthusiasm of this expedition, he was in-

different to his claims as sovereign in Ireland, and left his brother John to assert the power and authority derived from his father's grant.

John now assumed the title of Earl of Moreton and Lord of Ireland.* By the latter, he had formerly granted lands to St. Thomas the Martyr, and one of the first acts he now exercised was, to grant to this religious house a tenth of the revenue of *his* city of Dublin. By another charter it is also invested with several privileges and possessions, with immunities from all exactions and secular services, excepting only *in hiis quæ ad regiam coronam pertinent* with the power of holding a court for all pleas and complaints *nisi de hiis quæ ad regiam coronam spectaverint*. John also granted franchises and liberties to the city of Dublin, to be held of him and his heirs. He granted lands to be held by knight's service of him and his heirs, with liberties and free customs, and with a reservation of church lands, donations of bishoprics and abbeys, and pleas belonging to the crown. He confirmed a grant of land to the abbot of Glendalough, and united the see of Glendalough to that of Dublin. He appointed the deputies to govern Ireland during the reign of his brother Richard. These were the essential acts of power exercised by John during the reigns of his father and brother, by virtue of his pompous title of Lord of Ireland, which appears to have given him no higher authority than other governors. In those parts of Ireland not possessed by the English, his authority was not acknowledged even by foreigners. And when Richard had pre-

* The title of earl or eorl, meant originally a man of noble birth, as opposed to the ceorl. It was not a title of office till the eleventh century, when it

was used as synonymous to alderman, for a governor of a country or a province. After the conquest it superseded altogether the ancient title.

vailed on the pope to send his legate to solicit contributions for his expedition to the Holy Land, this spiritual mendicant was commissioned to exercise his jurisdiction in those parts of Ireland in which John, Earl of Moreton, had power and dominion. John himself speaks of his limited authority, and Eva, heiress of king Dermot, with still more precision, establishes the fact. But while John reserved the exercise of these powers, the administration of affairs and the support of his authority were entrusted to the British deputies. Hugh de Lacy had so conciliated the good-will of John, that he supplanted the rough De Courcy, and obtained the government. The uncourtly soldier could not conceal his indignation, to find his long services so slighted, and he retired in disgust. After his secession, the real weakness of the government was betrayed. The Irish were not insensible of the advantages to be derived from the discovery, and were ready to prove that their national spirit was not extinct, should fair opportunity be given for its action.

This spirit was soon displayed in insurrections and confederacies, to the confusion and distress of the kingdom, to add to which, Dublin was nearly destroyed by accidental fire, and the country was infested by robbers, who practised their violence without restraint or correction. Yet in the midst of this disregard of all laws human and divine, an abbey was founded by Cathal, surnamed the Bloody-handed, a fierce Irish chieftain, to mark the spot where he obtained a victory over the English. This victory raised to excess the dangerous spirit of the chiefs, urging them to hostilities against the detested borderers, occasioning continual distractions, and fraught with misery to both parties, of whom it is

hard to say which was the most barbarous. Again domestic jealousy and dissension saved the English from destruction, but the country was laid waste and ravaged, without any acquisition of real or permanent advantage. Such were the unfortunate events during the administration of the Earl Marshal, when Hamo de Valois was appointed to succeed him in the year 1197, a period of the utmost confusion and distress, when John de Courcy and Hugh de Lacy were employed in their respective provinces, independent of the English government, all Munster evacuated, and the province of Leinster with difficulty maintained. We avoid as much as possible secular history, but it will be found that a brief attention to the progress of political events is absolutely necessary, to illustrate those immediately connected with the Irish church.

To supply the necessities which he found pressed heavily on the enfeebled government, Hamo could devise no more speedy, and he thought effectual expedient, than the invasion of the ecclesiastical possessions. He therefore commenced his administration (instructed, it is probable, by John, being in perfect accordance with his exacting spirit) by seizing various lands, which had been granted to the see of Dublin. This act of violence was the more offensive and revolting, as the ecclesiastical rights were at that period deemed infinitely more sacred than those of other subjects. The archbishop, John Comyn, personally interested in the prosperity of the see, inveighed bitterly against the unwarrantable usurpation. Remonstrances, expostulations, and denunciations of the vengeance of heaven against the abominable sacrilege were abundantly employed, but without effecting redress. Comyn pro-

fessed to consider this obstinacy as a persecuting expulsion from his pastoral charge, and resolved to abandon his diocese rather than appear to acquiesce in the profane usurpation of ecclesiastical rights. He accordingly repaired to his cathedral with every solemn indication of a holy confessor, weighed down by the hand of persecution. All the attractive and gaudy appendages of Romish ceremonies were removed. No books, chalices, or images, were visible. He ordered the crucifixes to be crowned with thorns, and laid prostrate on the ground, and laying a tremendous sentence of interdict upon his diocese, departed from the kingdom. A miracle was devised more deeply to affect the minds of the ignorant and superstitious on this memorable occasion. One of these prostrate crucifixes was shown with all the marks of agony impressed upon it, the face inflamed, the eyes dropping tears, the body covered with sweat, and blood and water issuing from its side! The exiled prelate received this wonderful declaration of heaven in his favour, solemnly attested by his clergy, to be laid before the Roman pontiff. Yet were his enemies still obdurate, and though the devotional horror of the multitude was exalted to feverish excess by this deliberate and impious fraud, which their credulity and fanaticism construed into an evidence of divine wrath against the profane usurpers of sacred property, yet the suffragans of the archbishop were too much interested in the preservation of their own individual properties to hazard the displeasing the civil government by espousing the cause of their metropolitan. Hamo in fact did not confine his depredations to the see of Dublin. When that of Leighlin became vacant, he would not allow the abbot of Rosseval, who had been elected bishop by the clergy, to be consecrated, but seized the temporalities for his

own use and that of the state.* The exiled archbishop made the most earnest applications to Earl John, as well as to Richard, but neglect followed both. We are informed by Leland, that it was not till some years after, that Hamo, struck with compunction for his offence, granted to the see of Dublin twenty carucates of land, in atonement for the depredations he had committed in the course of his government. This was in perfect conformity to the principles of the age, in regard to ecclesiastical property, in which we may observe a species of moral compensation; for great as were the acquisitions of the church, they were frequently torn from her, as in this instance, by lawless power. Men who perhaps passed their lives in sacrilegious plunder, left their acquisitions as expiatory offerings. Rapacity frequently invaded ecclesiastical possessions with a daring violence not to be resisted, while, with a strange inconsistency, the utmost apparent reverence was paid to religious institutions and its ministers. During these disorders, Roderick O'Connor, last of the Irish monarchs, died in extreme old age in the monastery of Cong, where he had passed twelve years of profound quiet, unaffected, and

* Leighlin, in county Carlow, and province of Leinster. The bishopric was united to Ferns. At the east end of the church of old Leighlin is a famous well covered with great ash-trees, and dedicated to St. Lasarian. This place was formerly a city though now a mean village. It was a *sole* bishopric, founded in 632, and united to Ferns 1600. It is said, Germundus, a Danish prince, lies buried in this church. The last bishop of Leighlin, before the union

with Ferns, was Robert Grave, who, coming by sea to be installed, suffered shipwreck in the harbour of Dublin, and perished in the waves. The cathedral was burnt to the ground in consequence of lightning, and rebuilt in 1232; then dedicated to St. Lasarian or Lazarinus. Since the sees were united, it is used as a parish church, and is kept in good repair. There are also the remains of an old abbey.

undisturbed by the contending factions of his province, and unnoticed by his subjects. Like his contemporary Henry the Second, he suffered from the defection of his sons, which unnatural act deprived him of his throne. As Roderick had long ceased to exercise the regal power, his death occasioned no changes, and was an incident which soon passed into oblivion. By the demise of Richard the First the succeeding year, the rights transferred to John as Lord of Ireland reverted with the tithe to the crown of England.

From this period to the close of the thirteenth century we may regard the papal dominion as in the zenith. Rome had resumed all the terrors of her ancient name among the nations, her empire was even greater, for it extended over the minds as well as called into action the physical energies of men, in the contests in which she involved her royal vassals, in order to effect the purposes of her temporal ambition. The general supremacy affected by the Roman church over mankind in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, derived considerable support from the promulgation of the canon law. As the jurisdiction of the spiritual tribunals increased and extended, it was found necessary to establish an uniform system for the regulation of their decisions. After several minor compilations had appeared, Gratian, an Italian monk, published about 1140, his *Decretum*, or general collection of canons. The canon law was almost entirely founded upon the legislative power of the pope. The superiority of ecclesiastical to temporal power, or at least the absolute dependence of the former, strongly marks every passage in the canon law. It expressly declares that subjects owe no allegiance to an excommunicated lord, if after admonition he is not reconciled to the church. By means of her new jurisprudence, Rome ac-

quired in every country a powerful body of advocates, who, although many of them were laymen, would of course defend every pretension of the papacy. The institution also of the mendicant orders contributed powerfully to the aggrandizement of the papacy. The luxury and ostentation of the old monastic orders, had in a considerable degree brought them into disrepute. Their accumulated wealth had produced a deplorable relaxation of that discipline which had rendered them the object of public reverence. To counteract this alienation from the hierarchy, no means seemed so apparently efficacious as the institution of religious societies strictly debarred from the insidious temptations of wealth. Upon this principle was founded the order of mendicant friars, rendered incapable by the rules of their foundation of possessing estates, being maintained only by alms and pious remunerations. Of these, says our historian (Hallam), the two most celebrated were formed by St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisa, and established by the authority of Honorius the Third, in 1216, and 1223.*

*The Dominicans first came into England 1221 at Oxford. Franciscans at Canterbury, 1234. Both orders being confidential agents of the pope, they under various pretences exacted large sums of money through the kingdom, and drew even from the abbots of the monasteries. They early settled in Ireland also. An abbey of the Franciscans was founded 1460, at Innisherhan, county Cork, by Florence O'Driscoll, and an abbey of Dominicans was founded by the sovereign brethren and commonalty at

Kilmallock, county Limerick, which from the many remains of ancient grandeur has been called the Irish Balbec. In 1296, Sir William de Burgh founded a monastery for Franciscans at Galway, county Galway, province of Connaught. In 1381, at the period when there were two popes, the people of Ireland were doubtful to which they should pay obedience; pope Urban, to fix them entirely to his interest, empowered the guardian of this monastery to excommunicate every person in the pro-

Various other mendicant orders were instituted in the thirteenth century, but most of them declined or were suppressed, and besides the two principal none remain, except the Augustins and the Carmelites. These preachers were received by the people with enthusiasm not in the smallest degree deviating from the faith of the church, they professed only to teach it with greater purity, and to observe her ordinances with greater regularity. The supineness and the corruption of the secular clergy gave them every advantage over them; by preaching in public ways and administering the communion at a portable altar, they drew around them multitudes of such listeners as in all ages are easily attracted by similar means. The parish churches were deserted, none confessed but to these friars, and the regular discipline appeared to be subverted. The privilege of performing the sacerdotal functions in this manner was conceded to the mendicant orders by the favour of Rome; for aware of the powerful support they might receive from these orders, the pontiffs accumulated privileges and benefits upon them. They were exempt from episcopal authority, permitted to preach or hear confessions without leave of the ordinary, to accept of legacies, and to inter in their churches. Such privileges were naturally resisted by the other clergy, the bishops remonstrated, but it was all in vain, the privileges and the communities of the mendicant orders were

vince of Connaught who should adhere to Clement the seventh who he assured them was anti pope. A Dominican friary was founded at Clonmell in 1269, dedicated to St. Dominic. In the same year Otho de Grandison created a Franciscan friary, the church of which was

esteemed the most magnificent in Ireland; in it was kept an image of St. Francis, of the miracles wrought by which, marvellous stories are related. These are sufficient to prove that the mendicant influence early prevailed in Ireland.

peremptorily established. The bishops and secular clergy thus saw themselves excluded from the confidence of the laity; for in auricular confessions and other superstitions of the times, the friars, armed with the authority of the Pope, arrogated to themselves the power which had heretofore been possessed by the clergy. The Franciscans especially undermined the secular ecclesiastics. As a proof of the overweening pride of these professors of poverty, we may name a book published in the thirteenth century by a Franciscan under the title of "Introduction to the Everlasting Gospel," in which the author exalts St. Francis above Jesus Christ, and arrogates to his order the glory and the merit of reforming mankind by a new gospel, substituted in the room of that of Jesus Christ, thus to raise the mendicant tribe to the height of divine estimation in the eyes of mankind. This impious book was however, universally condemned, and the pope, mighty as he was, was obliged to decree it to the flames. It was perfectly natural that the favour bestowed upon these orders by the popes, should render them the obsequious servants of the holy see; and they sedulously exerted themselves in exalting its merits and maintaining its supremacy, and as many of these monks became eminent, both in canon law and scholastic theology, their influence was great and extended.

The dispensing power of the popes also created much trouble and incalculable mischiefs in destroying confidence between man and man in the observance of promissory oaths. Two dangerous principles are laid down in the decretals, that an oath disadvantageous to the church is not binding, and that one extorted by force was of slight obligation, and might be annulled upon ecclesiastical authority. It has been remarked, that if the pe-

riod we are reviewing was distinguished by greater ecclesiastical pretensions than any preceding; it was also one in which the disposition to resist them, quickly required greater consistence and determination. In fact, ecclesiastical jurisdiction so encroached upon secular tribunals that the evil was working its own remedy. The incoherent medley of laws and magistrates which these innovations brought in their train, could not fail to produce a violent collision of interests and endless confusions while it tended to subvert all temporal government, till at length it powerfully excited the jealousy of sovereigns; and thus at the very period when the papal structure appeared most stately and magnificent to the beholder, its foundation was secretly undermined and ready to give way, by the imperceptible but sure operation of mutable human opinion, naturally alarmed at the Babel pride which sought to rear an earthly temple to the skies, and to grasp all temporal as well as spiritual dominion. We shall close our cursory view of ecclesiastical innovation and pretension, with the substance of the famous constitution of Boniface the eighth.* It is denominated *Unam Sanctam*; the language is—The church is one body, and has one head. Under its command are two swords, the one spiritual, the other temporal; that to be used by the supreme pontiff himself, this by kings and soldiers by his licence and at his will. But the lesser sword must be subject to the greater, and the temporal to the spiritual authority. It concludes with the declaration that the subjection of every human being to the see of Rome, is an article of neces-

* This pope excommunicated Philip the Fair, assumed the title of "Master of all Kings," caused two swords to be borne

before him, put two crowns on his head and instituted the Jubilee.

sary faith. Another similar document pronounces all persons of whatever rank obliged to appear when personally cited before the audience or apostolical tribunal at Rome ; “ since such is our pleasure who by divine permission rule the world.” It will appear evident that the jealousy of sovereigns was not excited without cause when we reflect upon the important consequences which this high self-constituted authority involved.

CHAPTER VII.

John's accession to power—Hamo de Valois dismissed from his government—His successor Meiler Fitz Henry possesses political abilities—These advantages counteracted by dissensions of Irish lords—John de Courcy and Hugh de Lucy assume independence of the crown—English lords engage in local factions—Consequences—Great superstition prevailing—Conduct of William de Burgo—Conduct and indignant feelings of de Courcy—Is summoned to the presence of John—Obeys not the mandate—Is forcibly conveyed to England and confined—Proceedings of John—Policy of Innocent the third—Litigation of John with Irish clergy—Operations of the Pope—John determines to make an expedition to Ireland—William de Braosa—Irish chiefs swear allegiance—Facile disposition of the Irish—Proceedings of the king—Politick measure—Henry de Londres invested with the government—Ireland included in the submission of John to Innocent the third—The indignant feelings of Henry de Londres—Innocent writes to the clergy of Ireland—John's quarrel with his barons—Ireland at least indirectly benefited by the great charter—Superstition greatly prevails—Religious orders abound—Mendicant orders favoured—Useful to the hierarchy—Dissensions produced—Increasing arrogance—The evil tends to effect its own remedy—Doctrine of transubstantiation pronounced—and auricular confession ranked among the duties prescribed by divine law.—Persecutions against heretics—Death of John—Henry the third accedes—Irish lords petition for new graces—Request the queen or the king's brother may reside in Ireland—The king's answer—Duplicate of charter sent to Ireland—The good defeated by local rivalry—envy and disunion—Pernicious consequences—Tranquillity—Geoffry de Maurisco administers the government aided by Henry de Londres—Distinguished by his sovereign—His character—Ireland lost much by the death of earl of Pembroke—Disorders revived—Churches burned—Priests murdered—State of Society not favourable to peace and union—Henry's desire to improve the condition of Ireland—Investiture of Ireland on Prince Edward on his marriage—He undertakes a crusade and neglects Ireland—State of Ireland similar to that of England, but evils aggravated by local circumstances—Exactions of the king and the pope—The con-

sequences—Italian clergy encouraged—Remonstrances of Irish clergy—English clergy equally disliked—Arrogance of Irish clergy—Petition illustrative of their general conduct—Pope writes to Irish clergy—Encroachments of the clergy—Excommunication—Instances of it—Statute of Merton—Insincere policy of Henry—Pride of the clergy—Low state of moral feeling—Assumptions of the pope—They arouse the jealousies of the people—Gregory publishes his decretals.

THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

PERHAPS Ireland had not much reason to regret that although John had obtained full royal power, yet at the very commencement of his inglorious reign he was involved in such difficulties, that he had neither leisure nor probably any inclination to attend to the settlement of an island, so oppressed and harassed by continual contests, and so torn by faction as it then was. Hamo de Valois, whose mercenary spirit had led him not only to harass the church with his exactions, but also to commit great depredations on the laity, whereby he had amassed great riches at the expence of the crown as well as of the people, was in consequence removed with disgrace, being obliged to pay the king one thousand marcs as a discharge from his accounts. His successor was Meiler Fitz-Henry, natural son of Henry the first, and one of the bravest barons who had first adventured into Ireland. This nobleman possessed abilities to have made his government effective and useful, but a want of co-operation both in the king and great lords, obliged him to confine himself to the seat of government, as he was destitute of sufficient force to make any attempt to extend the English influence. The barbarous quarrels of rival chiefs still continued to distract the country, and both John de Courcy and Hugh de Lacy entered into treaties with the neighbouring lords, and assisted in their local and provincial contests,

both of them assuming independence of the crown, and even openly impeaching the title of John to the royal dignity. The English lords thus engaging in the local factions and contentions of the natives, could not fail to produce the most mischievous consequences, as instead of softening and civilizing them, it rather tended to keep alive their fierceness of spirit, and to increase the anarchy they ought to have tranquillized.

From the shocking detail of factions, usurpations, and massacres given by the Irish annalists, they appear not to have been produced so much by any natural defect of sensibility, as a base superstition, the certain and fatal corruptor of every generous and humane affection. Thus no chief was ever slain either in war or otherwise, but was found by some means to have offended one of their renowned saints: his death was imputed to the just vengeance of heaven, and was to be distinctly noted in order to display the power of the offended saint.

William de Burgo, an English lord, encouraged by the weakness of the government, and ambitious to obtain new acquisitions, forgot his allegiance to the crown, and made war as a sovereign and independent chief, proceeding to alarm the chiefs of Desmond by a vigorous incursion. After some hostilities the authority of the clergy together with that of the pope's legate residing in Desmond, prevented the calamities of war. By their interposition a treaty was entered into, and concluded, between the Desmondians and de Burgo, who had the honour of receiving hostages from the Irish lords as a security for the due performance of their stipulations. Meiler Fitz-Henry having with difficulty raised a sufficient force, conceiving it his duty to support the authority of his royal master against his revolted English subjects,

bent his course towards Limerick, of which place de Burgo was governor, with a resolution to chastise his disloyalty. The Irish chiefs who had provoked the English government, fearing the effects of the revenge they merited, with their usual mutability offered their assistance to Meiler Fitz Henry, who accepted the welcome reinforcement. Thus for the first time was seen an English governor at the head of native Irish troops. De Burgo could not resist the force, capitulation was therefore his only course. His submission was accepted, and homage renewed. Meiler entered into a regular and formal treaty with his new associates in arms, who harassed by faction and contention, readily took shelter beneath the protection of the English government. The spirit of disaffection which had arisen among the English barons, had been excited not only by their local power, but also by that generous spirit of innate integrity which ennobles man. It was impossible to reconcile with this spirit the conduct and the character of John, the unworthy son of the high-souled Henry, the imbecile and cowardly deserter of his own cause in France; the oppressor of his country, the murderer of his nephew. The ardent and artless de Courcy was more especially unable to conceal his sentiments of abhorrence, and expressed his strong feelings in terms suitable to his unrefined integrity.

Hugh de Lacy of more flexible and temporising character, and jealous of the increasing power of the rough soldier, took instant advantage of his honest, but indiscrete frankness, by delating him to the king as a dangerous and powerful subject, who not only had abjured his allegiance, but boldly and unequivocally accused his sovereign as the assassin of his nephew, the rightful heir of the throne. The unworthy John was naturally

stung by this well merited reproach, and incensed at the revolt of his baron. [1203.] He summoned him to his presence to do him homage, De Courcy treated the mandate with contempt. Upon which, De Lacy and his brother had commission to convey the refractory noble to his enraged sovereign. These rivals of John de Courcy proceeded with alacrity to the execution of their commission, we pass over the detail of their operations to effect this service, as although highly interesting yet quite irrelevant to our subject, and content ourselves with saying that De Courcy was conveyed to England and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Upon his death, which appears to have taken place soon after this event, the earldom of Ulster was granted to De Lacy in prejudice to the right of Milo the son of De Courcy; thus it seems he was not reconciled to the king or received into favour, but on the contrary, his possessions were transferred to the family of his rival. The distress of John obliged him to summon to his assistance his most favourite barons: Hugh de Lacy and Meiler Fitz Henry were called into England, and Walter de Lacy the brother of Hugh, together with the archdeacon of Stafford were entrusted with the government. The latter was deemed a proper agent to solicit the subsidy which John demanded from the clergy of Ireland, in order to enable him to recover Normandy, and oppose the progress of Philip of France. This was the usual pretence of the mercenary and improvident John which served him to harass his subjects with continual oppressive demands exacted with merciless rapacity, and lavished without honour or advantage till roused from his scandalous apathy by the aspiring ambition of Innocent the third. This great political pontiff had a short time previous to the accession of John, been openly and

boldly opposed by a prince of Desmond, in his attempt to confer the bishopric of Ross; yet not discouraged, he with his characteristic vigilance watched his opportunity of making experiment of his power in Ireland, before he declared his designs against the church and state of England.

In the grants made to the English adventurers in Ireland, for the most part there was an express reservation of the donations of bishoprics and abbeys to the lord of Ireland. Accordingly, on the decease of Thomas O'Connor, prelate of Armagh, John asserted this privilege, and in virtue of it nominated Humphrey de Tickhull, an Englishman, to the see. The suffragan bishops, however, and some of the clergy of the diocese, urged most probably by the legate residing in Ireland, proceeded, in disregard to the royal mandate, to elect Eugene, a countryman of their own. John, indignant at this contempt of his authority, addressed an appeal to the Irish legate against this irregular election; but Eugene in the meantime repaired to Rome, and his nomination was confirmed by the pope. The king, still more indignant at this usurpation of his authority, issued a peremptory mandate to the clergy of Armagh, strictly forbidding them to receive Eugene, or to acknowledge him as their prelate; and, with a resolution to defend his rights which redeems his character from utter obloquy, on the death of Tickhull, he nominated the archdeacon of Meath as his successor.

Thus was the contest protracted for a considerable time, the clergy of Armagh adhering to the pope, and receiving Eugene; the king insisting on his privileges, and withholding the temporalities of the See. The reader of history will know, that this is but one of numerous instances of papal assumption. The pretext to justify these arbitrary

proceedings was, an ardent zeal for the welfare of the church, and a paternal concern lest dangerous heresies should get a footing into the flock of Christ. The innovation was keenly opposed by the bishops, who had hitherto enjoyed the privileges of nominating to the smaller benefices; and still more by several sovereigns, who employed the force of warm remonstrance and vigorous edicts, to arrest the progress of this new pretension. None felt more the despotism of the pontiff than John of England, in which, whatever might be the unworthy character of the monarch, the conduct of Innocent III. was unjust, imperious, and cruel.

But this aspiring pontiff was not content with his usurpations of the civil power. He aimed at a substantial and real dominion over the princes of the earth, and for this end he knew it to be necessary to reduce the ecclesiastics themselves into an entire dependence on their spiritual leader. Innocent began his operations by imposing taxes, at pleasure, on the clergy. The crusades offered him a pretext. He sent collectors all over Europe, who levied, by his authority, the fortieth of all ecclesiastical revenues for the relief of the Holy Land. Many other gross invasions of ecclesiastical property followed; and although necessity obliged to submission, they produced a very natural disaffection towards the court of Rome.

The character of John and the detestation in which he was held, gave the advantage of popular favour and opinion, however, to the clergy in this dispute respecting the primacy of Armagh; and this must ever be regarded as an important advantage. The English competitors solely relied on court favours; they possessed little individual merit, and depended upon fortunate incidents or connections, to obtain preferment. Eugene, on

the contrary, had recommended himself by a long course of exemplary conduct ; which raised a prejudice at the pretensions of his rivals, and affixed odium on the opposition of John. But the length of the dispute, and the intervention of other affairs, operated in favour of Eugene, more than the superiority of his character, which, perhaps, would not have been so highly appreciated, had not his nomination been opposed by a hated power. But above all, we may attribute influence to three hundred marks of silver, and one hundred marks of gold, presented to the mercenary John in his necessities, without the apparent interference of the prelate. By the persuasive eloquence of this gift, the violence of the incensed monarch was softened. He was prevailed upon to invest Eugene with all the rights of the see. So that Innocent thus gained an advantage, which the reader of English history will see he took good care to improve and establish, in his contest respecting the see of Canterbury, in 1205. On that memorable occasion, when the Bishop of Exeter and others of his brethren declared for the pope, and abandoned his diocese, the Irish prelate of Armagh, whose election, as we have related, the king opposed, was entrusted with his pastoral charge. But the dreadful sentence of excommunication, the disaffection of his subjects, and fears of a conspiracy among his nobles, at length so far prevailed over the supineness of John, as to determine him, in order to give lustre to his government, and to intimidate his enemies, to engage in some military enterprize. Scotland and Wales, which were first threatened, averted the evil by timely submission, and there was little real occasion to carry hostilities into Ireland, the vigorous government of Meiler Fitz Henry having reduced it into some order. But a pre-

text is never wanting to justify the obstinate acts of self-will, and even the tyranny of John furnished him with one. Conscious of the general hatred with which he was regarded, he required hostages from his nobility as security for their allegiance. Amongst these noblemen was William de Braosa, who had received considerable grants in Thomond. To the king's messenger, who came for this purpose, the wife of Braosa replied with indiscreet severity, that her children should never be entrusted to a man who had murdered his own nephew. William, though innocent of the insult, was pursued by the vengeance of John; he fled with his wife and children to Ireland, where they were generously protected by de Lacy. The king, however, made this the pretext for his expedition into Ireland. The tragedy of Braosa was soon completed; his retreat was discovered, his unhappy wife and children were seized, imprisoned, and finally there starved; and the baron himself narrowly escaped by flying into France.* On the arrival of John, we are told, upwards of twenty of the Irish chieftains swore allegiance to him, engaging to establish the English laws and customs in the kingdom: and in the same year, 1210; courts of judicature were instituted. The readiness of the Irish to enter into solemn engagements, and with the same facility to depart from them, is well known. It is probable that their consciences were quieted by penances, or some services rendered to the priesthood; for unless the taint of false principles

* The wife of Braosa is said to have addressed herself to the queen, and attempted to purchase her mediation by an extraordinary present from

her Irish demesnes, of four hundred kine, all milk white, except the ears, which were red.

in religion had entered deep, and spread wide in the social body, it is hardly to be conceived that the moral sense should be so deadened.

The name of king seems to have acted like a prostrating spell upon the fierce and haughty chieftains, and to have brought them crouching to the feet of the base-minded John.

John, however, seems to have projected some schemes of improvement and legislation, for the more effectual information of his Irish subjects than they had hitherto obtained; he took with him some individuals versed in the laws of their country, by whose counsel and assistance a regular code and charter was ordained and appointed. The king's lands were also divided into counties, with sheriffs and other officers. John remained three months in Ireland, and on his departure the government was entrusted to John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich. This prelate is said to have administered the government with so much wisdom and vigour, that he was enabled, when England was threatened with a French invasion, in order to execute the pope's sentence of deposition, to send a company of knights, with three hundred well appointed infantry, from Ireland, to the assistance of the king. This is an honourable testimony to his loyalty and courage, as Ireland was still disturbed by local factions, which kept the English in a state of insecurity, and obliged them ever to be on the defensive.

We shall now mention an act of sound policy, which, whether it emanated from John or his ministers, is worthy of record; and as a prelate was the appointed agent, we may be excused the digression. It appears from the period of John's visit to Ireland, to have been considered as a point of sound policy, to take every method of

conciliating the affections of those chiefs who had become feudatories to the king. Together with a patent of protection to Cathal, a chieftain who had appealed to the justice of the English to support his local claims, was an order to Henry de Londres, Archbishop of Dublin, to purchase such a quantity of scarlets as he should judge sufficient to make robes, to be presented to the kings of Ireland, and others of the king's liege men, natives of the kingdom.

"It is very probable," says Leland, "these robes were made after the English fashion. If so, it was by no means a contemptible device to endeavour to habituate these chiefs to the English garb, and by their example to render it fashionable in their territories."

"Men's apparel," saith Spencer, speaking of Ireland and its manners, "is commonly made according to their conditions, and their conditions are oftentimes governed by their garments; for the person that is gowned, is by his gowne put in mind of gravitie, and also restrained from lightness by the very unaptnesse of his weed." And the gentler and less offensive method of introducing an advantageous change of apparel under the appearance of grace and favour, had it been pursued with steadiness and address, might have proved more effectual than the penal laws of later times, which by an avowed and violent opposition to the manners of the Irish, proved too odious to be reconciled."

Henry de Londres, who succeeded to John Comyn in 1213, was now, 1214, invested with the government, although it was, for the most part, administered by Geoffry Morris, an eminent English settler in Munster. Henry himself was summoned to attend his royal master in England,

the first instance recorded of a prelate of the Irish church being admitted to the councils of his sovereign, and acting as a spiritual baron of the realm. When the contest of John with Innocent III. ended in his shameful submission, the prelate of Dublin is named first of those lords, who were present at the execution of the deed, in which he barely declared, that not constrained by fear, but by his own free-will, he did for the remission of his sins and those of his family, resign England and Ireland to God, to St. Peter, and St. Paul, and to Pope Innocent, and his successors in the apostolic chair, agreeing to hold those dominions as feudatory to the see of Rome, for himself and successors, by the annual payment of seven hundred marks for England, and three hundred for Ireland, in acknowledgment of the pope's supremacy and jurisdiction. He further stipulated, that if he or his successors should presume to revoke or infringe this charter, they should instantly forfeit all right to their dominion. These were the conditions for restoring to him the privilege of communion, and the return of his regalia. Every spectator of this humiliating scene glowed with indignation, and Henry de Londres exclaimed aloud against the intolerant insolence of the legate trampling the tribute-money under his feet, in token of the utter subjection of the king. Henry is honourably distinguished on this occasion, as the only person who ventured to express indignation at the shameful transaction, and the overweening haughtiness of Pandolf. But although this legate had brought John to these base submissions, he refused to remove the excommunication and interdict, till an estimation could be taken of the losses of the clergy, whose

estates he had confiscated in consequence of their obeying the interdict,* and of those who had exiled themselves in consequence of the sentences of excommunication. The issue of the whole was, after the most abject concessions on the part of John, that the bishops got reparation beyond what they had any title to demand, and the inferior clergy were not so fortunate. After the interdict, in consequence was taken off, the

* The sentence of interdict was at this time the great instrument of papal vengeance and policy. It was denounced without mercy on offending sovereigns, and made the guilt of one person involve the ruin of millions even in their spiritual and eternal welfare. The execution of it was artfully calculated to strike the senses and imagination in the highest degree, and to operate with irresistible force on the superstitious minds of the people. Indeed, few minds possess strength sufficient to repel the appalling and paralyzing effect of a whole nation being suddenly deprived of all exterior exercise of its religion. To view altars despoiled of their ornaments, crosses, reliques, images, and statues of saints prostrated on the earth; and, as if the air itself was profaned, and might pollute them by its contact, the priests covering them up, even from their own approach and veneration. The use of bells forbidden, the bells being removed from their places, and with other sacred things laid

on the ground. Mass celebrated with closed doors, and none but priests admitted to the holy institution. The laity partaking of no religious rite, except baptism to new born infants, and the communion to the dying. The dead refused burial in consecrated grounds, but thrown into ditches, or interred in common fields, their obsequies unattended by any ceremony. Marriage celebrated in the church-yards; the people prohibited the use of meat, as in times of deepest penance; debarred from all pleasures and entertainments, and forbid even to salute each other, or to give any decent attention to their persons or dress.

Every circumstance indicated the deepest distress, and the most immediate apprehension of divine vengeance and indignation.—*See Hume's History. Reign of John.*

Our nature is too prone to be affected by externals, not to be powerfully influenced by such a dreadful state of society, and few are the minds sufficiently powerful to resist its terrifying effects.

king renewed in the most solemn manner, and by a new charter, sealed with gold, his professions of homage and obedience to the Romish see.

A new legate, Nicholas, Bishop of Frescati, succeeded Pandolf. He came with a letter of credence from the pope, conceived in terms of deep hypocrisy; and when John had made the second resignation of his kingdoms we have adverted to, Innocent, with an ostentation of favour and condescension to his royal vassal, addressed a letter to the prelates, princes, lords, and people of Ireland, notifying the total reconciliation made by the blessing of Heaven between the royal state of England and the holy see, expressing the tenderest concern for his beloved son in Christ, the illustrious King John, whose realms, by his grant, were rightfully invested in the Roman church. It concluded with commanding and directing them, by his apostolic mandate, to persevere in their allegiance to the king and his heirs, who were now the objects of his paternal care and favour.

This transaction was succeeded by the contest between John and his barons; Henry de Londres again appears in the councils of his monarch, attending the congress of Runnemede, taking place immediately after the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the preamble to the great Charter, he is also mentioned as one of those prelates and barons, by whose counsel it is alleged to have been granted. With other prelates, he protested on occasion of a clause of this charter, by which it was apprehended that the being of all forests would be endangered, and joined in declaring the intention of both parties. We find him likewise united with the English prelates, in a protest against the refusal of the barons to certify their submission and allegiance, by an instrument

under their seals. Yet, although this prelate, and also William, Earl Marshall, a baron of great wealth and influence in Ireland, were thus attendant on the king, it does not appear on this important occasion that any particular requisitions were made in behalf of his Irish subjects, or any measures were taken for including them specifically in the grants of the crown.

It is true, no immediate changes were made by the concession of the great charter, as far as relates to Ireland, yet doubtless it would give rise by degrees to more order and justice in the administration of government. For although, as our great historian observes, the great charter contained no establishment of new courts, magistrates, or senates, nor abolished the old—though it introduced no new distribution of the powers of the commonwealth, and no innovation in the political or public law of the kingdom, it yet guarded, by verbal clauses, against such tyrannical practices as are incompatible with civilised government. The barbarous license of kings, and of the nobles, was thereby restrained; men acquired, of course, more security for their properties and their liberties; and government approximated nearer to that end for which it was originally instituted—the distribution of justice, and the equal protection of the citizens. Acts of violence and iniquity in the crown, which before were deemed merely injurious to individuals, were now regarded, in some degree, as public injuries, and as infringements of a charter calculated to promote general security. Hence the establishment of the great charter, without seeming otherwise to innovate in the distribution of political power, became a kind of epoch in the constitution; and we may add, gradually and

imperceptibly extended its influence to the remotest parts subjected to English sway.

The superstition of this period was excessive; multitudes of religious orders abounded every where, and were not only tolerated, but were distinguished and enriched with various privileges and prerogatives. The number of convents increased in proportion to monasteries. The circumstances of the church had produced the mendicant orders. Innocent III. with the sagacity that distinguished him, perceived the necessity of their institution, and accordingly gave them his most cordial protection, and indications of favour. Too many of the monastic orders, beneath the corrupting influence of opulence, had lost sight of their original obligations; and on the other hand, the enemies of the church, the various sects who had left its communion, followed certain austere modes of life and conduct, which formed a strong contrast between them and the religious, not much to the credit of the latter in the public estimation. These sects maintained, with justice, that voluntary poverty was the leading and essential quality in a servant of Christ. They obliged their doctors to imitate the simplicity of the apostles—reproached the church with its overgrown opulence, and the vices and corruptions of the members of it flowing from this source. They gained so much credit from this profession of their principles, that it was deemed indispensable by the hierarchy to introduce into the church a set of men, who, by the austerity of their manners, contempt of riches, and external gravity and sanctity, might resemble those doctors who had gained such reputation to the heretical sects, and who might be so far above the allurements of worldly profit and pleasure, as not to be seduced

from the performance of their sacred duties, or from persevering in their subordination to the pontiffs.

Experience proved the policy of these societies, they proved highly useful, they were indeed the very soul of the hierarchy, the engines of state, the secret springs of the motions of the one and the other, and the authors and directors of every great and important event, both in the religious and political world. They restored the church from the decline which threatened her previous to their institution, by their zeal and activity against heretics in negotiations and embassies for the interest of the hierarchy, and in confirming the wavering multitude in their implicit obedience to the pontiff. These benefits were rewarded by privileges which soon however rendered them objects of envy, and in many instances the discipline of the church was invaded and injured in their favour, so that the most bitter dissensions were produced between them and the bishops. When it became more generally known that they possessed such a peculiar place in the esteem and protection of the church, the number of them multiplied so exorbitantly all over Europe, that they at length became a burden not only to society but even to the church itself. Supported by the pontiffs, the pride and arrogance of the Dominicans and Franciscans, the two principal of these orders increased daily. Their impious presumptions deluded and captivated the ignorant multitude by whom they were well nigh deified, divisions even between the two orders were bitter, and their mutual schemes to gain ascendancy disturbed the tranquillity of the church which fostered them. Good however certainly sprang out of those evils, for if we trace the events that occurred in the church from this period, we shall

be convinced that the mendicant orders by their assumptions gave several mortal blows to the authority of the church of Rome, and excited in the minds of the people those desires for a reformation which produced in after times such glorious and substantial effects. The pope assumed a despotic power over all the churches, their particular customs, privileges and immunities being treated with disdain; even the canons of general councils were set aside by dispensing power, and the whole administration of the church centered in the papacy.

Innocent the third published new articles of faith, and amongst other opinions, pronounced that which is held to this day, and known by the term transubstantiation. The same pontiff placed by his own authority, among the duties prescribed by the divine laws, that of auricular confession to a priest, a confession that implied not only a general acknowledgement, but a particular enumeration of the sins and follies of the penitent. By this a powerful influence was obtained over the minds of men by becoming acquainted with their secrets. At the same time the faith of the penitent received no increase of vigour, nor their hearts substantial amendment. It served rather to instil into their minds a persuasion that by a private confession of sin, and a consequent submission to penances, or to the injunctions of the clergy, the greatest crimes might be expiated, though the commission was frequent and notorious. "Absolution," says a forcible modern writer, "which adds boldness to the resolute and the profligate, becomes a fresh source of disquietude to a timid and sickly mind. Doubts innumerable disturb the unhappy sufferer, not as to the priest in granting pardon, but respecting its own fulfilment of the required conditions, without which,

to receive absolution is sacrilege." How different are these superstitions and morbid feelings to those of firm reliance and animating hope, resting on a Saviour's merits, and that grateful love which excites to good works for his sake !

The doctrine of transubstantiation we shall see produced a long series of contention and trouble in the church, and brought with it a train of ceremonies and institutions respecting the eucharist which still exist in full power to dazzle the communicants in the Romish ritual. During the period we now review, the Roman pontiffs carried on dreadful persecutions against those they branded with the denomination of heretics, that is, against all those who called in question their authority, or taught doctrines different from those adopted and propagated by the see of Rome, while the hierarchy rejected every thing that tended to remove the evil they threw over the lustre of genuine Christianity, well knowing that its authority must decline in proportion, as the mind is opened and enlarged ; and that its reserve and dissimulation must give way to the piercing glance of truth directed by enlightened intellect. Although it is equally unjust and inconclusive to pass a general censure on any principles from their individual abuse, yet we may cite the character of John, so conspicuous at this period, as an instance of the inefficacy of the religion of the age to purify the heart or correct the passions. The progress of his life was marked by the display of complicated vices, ruinous to himself, destructive to his people, and odious to all. His death, in the forty-ninth year of his age, freed the nation from his corrupt example, and the dangers to which his crimes and his follies combined to expose it. On the accession of his infant son Henry, it appears that the Irish lords who had derived no

individual advantage from the great charter, thought it a favourable period for explaining their grievances, and petitioning the throne for new graces; for this purpose they made use of the intervention of Ralph, bishop of Norwich, one of the king's chaplains. Their complaints related to the violences of John, and among their requisitions was one of infinite consequence, and which if obtained might have proved of incalculable advantage to the English interest as well as that of Ireland. It was that either the queen dowager Isabella of Angoulesme or the king's brother should take up their residence in Ireland, "The people of this land" saith Davyes "both English and Irish, out of natural pride, did ever love and desire to be governed by great persons." The answer of king Henry the third was very gracious, but the above requisition was waived in the following clause of it. "As to sending our lady mother or our brother into Ireland, our answer is, that taking the advice and assent of our faithful subjects, we shall do that which shall be expedient to our interest, and the interest of our realm." The great charter conceded by John was renewed by Henry, with such alterations and amendments as the circumstances of the times made necessary, and a duplicate of it was transmitted to Ireland under the seal of the legate and the protector William earl of Pembroke, for the benefit of the king's faithful subjects in the kingdom, and with those alterations only which the local necessities of Ireland required. Thus were the rights and privileges of the English settlers ascertained and established, and good opportunity for rising in the scale of nations was given them. They were put upon an equality of rights and privileges with their fellow subjects of England, and obtained the same grants which are to this day revered as the

basis of English liberty. But the same spirit which had hitherto disturbed still possessed them, and they in consequence still lived in a state of rivalry, envy, and dissension, and as their claims were to be supported by force of arms, their own vassals as well as the native Irish felt the severest consequences of their pride and oppression. Hence those calamities under which the nation groaned for so long a period may be traced not to the inequitable and oppressive principles in the English government, but to the vicious and impolitic conduct of individuals. The gradual progress of the English power had by the period we are now arrived at, considerably weakened that of the old Irish chieftains. It was only a very few that their annalists could extol as the terror of the Gauls (so they styled the English), and destroyers of their castles, whenever they once had paid tribute or submission to the foreigners.

The earl of Pembroke, who administered the government of the young king with ability and vigour, had large possessions in Ireland, and was in consequence attached to their interests. They were encouraged by the expectation of his support, and at the same time restrained by the authority of his station and character from all irregularities, which they were sensible he would be informed of and punish. These causes produced tranquillity throughout the island. Geoffry de Maurisco continued in the administration, and Henry de Londres was sent under the pretence of resuming his pastoral charge, but really as coadjutor to Geoffry. The king's letter, addressed to his liege barons of Ireland, expresses the reluctance with which he parted with this prelate, and how necessary his presence and counsels were to him and the realm of England, directing them to consult him and the chief governor in every thing

pertaining to the regulation of the kingdom. But although this prelate was so highly distinguished by his political conduct, yet in his ecclesiastical character he was no less eminent. Soon after his arrival he held a synod at Dublin, the constitutions of which are extant, and do honour to the principles and temper of De Londres. But the Irish relaters give a repulsive picture of his private manners and his insolence towards his dependants. They inform us that he summoned the tenants of his see to produce the instruments by which they held their lands, which he had no sooner received under pretence of examining their titles, than in an affected passion he committed them to the flames. A violent tumult succeeded the first astonishment at this treacherous act. Several of the bishop's domestics were grievously wounded, and he narrowly escaped. To allay the commotion he had raised, he found it necessary to confirm their tenures to the aggrieved parties; but he could not efface the just odium of his attempt. He was branded with the name of Burn Bill, and ever after known by that disgraceful appellation. It is mortifying to see this prelate thus departing from his principles as a man and spiritual guide, to observe the favourite and counsellor of his sovereign descending to an act which would have disgraced the most vile mercenary, but it is a striking instance of the contempt with which the rights of the subjects in Ireland were in these times treated by the more powerful of the neighbouring kingdom. Ireland, by the decease of the great earl of Pembroke in 1219, lost a powerful and useful patron, and from that period disorders again revived. English claims and Irish rivalry again filled the kingdom with confusion. Ever the secret enemies, and often the avowed adversaries of each other, the

English frequently drove the Irish into insurrections, and then punished them with redoubled cruelty for their resistance. Amongst the violences committed, disgraceful mention is made of the burning of churches and the massacre of priests.

The mixture of Irish tributaries and English subjects, which formed the community, was highly inimical both to the peace and welfare of the nation. In this state of jealousy and outrage, it will readily be imagined that the salutary institutions of law were little regarded. Equity and justice were scorned by those imperious lords, whose sole pursuit was rapine and ambition, and so entirely were they contemned, that a remonstrance appears to have been made in 1228 against this dangerous neglect and suspension of the laws, Henry finding it necessary to transmit his mandate to the chief governor for suppressing the innovation. But this would appear to have availed little or nothing, as another similar mandate was issued in 1246. The Irish who did not enjoy the privileges of English laws were particularly liable to oppression, for harassed on every side by their native chiefs, and the more powerful English lords, without enjoying the security of subjects, they felt sensibly their inferiority, and several instances occur in this reign of some of the most peaceable suing for a royal patent by which they might enjoy the privileges of English subjects, and on their plea of fidelity and good services were admitted by the king to a participation of the rights they desired. Henry indeed appears to have been sincerely interested in the amelioration and improvement of Ireland, but some counteracting cause continually opposed his views. In the year 1253 for instance, a measure was pursued which might have been attended with

most important results, had England herself been composed, or the advantages of a regular and peaceable establishment in Ireland duly considered, this was the investiture of Ireland upon the gallant Prince Edward, on his union with the Infanta of Spain. So that the lands possessed or claimed by the king's subjects in Ireland, were called the lands of Lord Edward, the officers and ministers of government were styled the officers of Edward Lord of Ireland, and the writs ran in that prince's name. Some time subsequent to these grants, Edward was directed by Henry to repair to his Irish government for the more effectual settlement and reformation of the state.

Happy in all probability would it have been for Ireland, had her government been administered by a prince of such distinguished abilities. But he found elsewhere ample employment for his active spirit, and the affairs of Ireland were conducted by deputies under every disadvantage of being narrowly watched by the envious and jealous eyes of those who ruled in the king's name, and were not without alarm at the bold and penetrating spirit of his son. By this means the acts of his government were in a great measure rendered nugatory. When general affairs became more composed, the passion for crusades interposed, and Edward in pursuing the shadows of honour in far distant climes, neglected that in which he might have gained it in permanent reality, by civilizing a disordered people, by relieving them from the weight of oppression, and converting intestine tumult into peaceful concord. But while we remark upon the violent spirit of oppression and anarchy which pervaded Ireland, we must not be supposed to assert that it was peculiarly confined to that nation. The barons who exercised the one and produced the other

did but follow the example of those of England, as a glance at the history of the period will convince the reader. Ireland, exposed to the fatal mischiefs of a feeble government, an ambitious and daring nobility, laws suspended, controuled or contemned, torn by factions the offspring of pride, domestic anarchy, injustice of invaders, local feuds and barbarous massacres, presents at this period a melancholy study for the historian, reflecting equal disgrace on all parties. Natural evils accompanied these moral disorders, dearth and disease were the consequences of national confusion, and seasons remarkably severe are stated to have aggravated the heavy misfortunes of the kingdom, but without suspending those direful animosities which had produced the former of the evils. To heighten still more these calamities, the severest exactions were made on Ireland by the weak and irresolute Henry in his real or pretended necessities, and by the pope in prosecution of his avaricious and ambitious schemes. In the year 1226, a fifteenth of all cathedral churches and religious houses, and a sixteenth of all other ecclesiastical revenues were demanded by the king with the concurrence of the pope. In many respects amiable, Henry was yet totally unfitted to sway the sceptre in the disorderly times in which he lived; his temper was too facile and his mind too feeble. The one led him to impolitic changes, the other prevented him from duly appreciating the necessity of vigour, ability, and virtue in his ministers. His quarrels with the Scots, Welsh, French, and the king of Castile, in which he equally betrayed his weakness and ill-judged liberality, if such it might be called, that was exercised at the cost of others, were severally made the occasions of his demands both on the clergy and laity. But oppressive as were

these exactions, those of the see of Rome were even more so. In England they were carried to great excess, in Ireland they were intolerable, which was less able in its distressed state to answer the demands. The wretched laity were stripped of even the necessities of life, the churches of their ornaments, to supply the rapacious demands of legates and nuncios. The papal ministers, finding a vast stock of power amassed by their predecessors, were desirous of converting it to immediate profit, to be enjoyed at home rather than of enlarging their authority in foreign countries where they never intended to reside. Every thing was now become venal in the Roman tribunals, simony was openly and shamefully practised, no favours, and even no justice could be obtained without a bribe. The merit of an individual, or a cause, were light in the balance against the highest bidder. The pope openly assumed an absolute authority of setting aside, in all the plenitude of his apostolic power, all particular rules, and privileges of patrons, churches and convents.

On pretence of remedying the abuses that had crept into the church, and upon the plea of the poverty of the Roman see having produced the grievances, Pope Honorius in 1226, demanded from every cathedral two of the best prebend's, and from every convent, two monk's portions to be set apart as a perpetual and settled revenue of the papal crown. This however was too glaring an imposition to be conceded. About three years after he however demanded, and *obtained* the tenth of all ecclesiastical revenues, which was levied in a very oppressive manner; payment being required before the clergy had drawn their rents and tythes, at the same time sending about usurers, who in the exigence of this premature de-

mand, advanced the money at exorbitant interest. These usurers took up the trade of agents for the pope, and it is asserted that in a few years he through their means, partly by levies of money, partly by the revenues of benefices, had drawn from the kingdom nine hundred and fifty thousand marks, a sum equivalent to fifteen millions of present currency.* The legates also were active agents in this avaricious exaction; one is stated, after having in vain attempted the clergy as a body, to have obtained individually, by the aid of menace and intrigue, large sums from the prelates and convents, and on his departure, to have taken more money out of the kingdom than he left in it. The experiment was so successful, that it was renewed by a nuncio, who was vested with powers from Rome of suspending and excommunicating all clergymen who refused to comply with his demands. The king, who relied on the pope for the support of his tottering authority, never failed to countenance these exactions, indeed he sometimes shared the booty, and was indulged with the produce of taxes imposed upon his own clergy to defray the costs of his projected war against Sicily.

While these exactions were taking place, all the chief benefices of the kingdom were conferred upon Italians, great numbers of whom were sent over to be provided for. The evils of non residence and pluralities followed to an exorbitant and pernicious extent. As an instance, Mansel, the king's chaplain, is stated to have held at one time seven hundred ecclesiastical livings! Abuses of this kind became so glaring as to penetrate through the darkness of superstition itself. The

* See Hallam's Middle Ages.

people entered into associations, rose against the Italian clergy, and with the usual impetuosity of an indignant and indiscriminating mob, pillaged the barns, wasted the lands, and insulted the persons of those foreign ecclesiastics found in the kingdom, and when the legal authorities proceeded to the investigation of these acts of violence, the agents of them were found so numerous, and those of high rank, that they passed unpunished. The public feeling was clearly indicated by these circumstances, it evidently appears that the papal power had passed its meridian, and was beginning at least, however insensibly, to decline in consequence of the inordinate avarice and unblushing extortions of the court of Rome. To the clergy it was oppressive and disgusting, and would have been resisted and resented, had not their own immunities and authority been so inseparably involved. In the laity, however, it produced an inveterate spirit, not only in reference to papal tyranny, but towards the whole system of ecclesiastical independence. These feelings were universal, and the king, however solicitous to countenance those exactions, yet sometimes found it necessary to yield to the general clamour, and to controul them, not only in England but in Ireland. Legates were sometimes refused admittance into Ireland without the royal licence. They pleaded the necessity of repairing thither, to confer absolution on those who in the public commotions had laid violent hands upon the clergy; a spiritual power not to be entrusted but to the immediate delegates of the sovereign pontiff. "This pretence in that age of superstition could not be entirely rejected, but the strictest injunctions were sent to the government, that the legantine authority should be confined to this sin-

gle object; but rapacious demands, that could not be openly avowed, were successfully obtained by private and clandestine management.

In the same manner as in England, attempts were made to introduce numbers of ecclesiastics into Ireland. Strong remonstrances were made to Henry against this abuse, in thus investing proud and licentious foreigners with the dignities and revenues of the Irish church, whilst they refused to engage in the duties of their function, or to reside in the country which they pillaged by their extortion. Henry in consequence, by letter to the chief governor, directed that the pope's agents should not only be prevented from extorting money from the ecclesiastics, but from making such shameful dispositions of the benefices. But the clergy had not only the partialities of the pope, but those of Henry himself to contend with. The neglected, the worthless, or the depressed among their English brethren, sought refuge in the church of Ireland, to the utter mortification and discontent of the whole body of ecclesiastics, both of the Irish and English race, who regarded them as aliens, and deemed the invasion of what they called their own rights equally oppressive, whether Italy or England furnished the influx of emigrants. Though compelled to submit to the royal authority, strengthened by that of the pope, they yet determined to exert all the power they had left against the invasions of the foreign clergy. The Irish clergy were indeed possessed with exalted ideas of the dignity and glory of their own church. They triumphed in their long catalogue of saints, and the legendary histories of their piety, purity, rigid discipline, and stupendous miracles; affecting to scorn these new intruders and to dread their contamination. To further inflate this spiritual pride, Laurence

O'Toole, the famous archbishop of Dublin, had been canonized by pope Honorius. But how little reason they had to arrogate to themselves superiority in the peculiar graces of their function will appear in the following curious petition of a widow who had suffered from their violence and injustice, by which it is evident they were by no means exempt from the popular vices of the times.

“Margaret le Blunde, of Cashel, petitions our lord the king's grace, that she may have her inheritance which she recovered at Clonmell before the king's judges, &c. against David Macmacherwayt, bishop of Cashel. *Item.* The said Margaret petitions redress on account that her father was killed by the said bishop. *Item,* For the imprisonment of her grandfather and mother whom he shut up and detained in prison untill they perished by famine, because they attempted to seek redress for the death of their son, father of your petitioner, who had been killed by the said bishop, because he had their inheritance in his hand at the time he killed their father. And it is to be noted, that the said bishop had built an abbey in the city of Cashel on the king's lands granted for this purpose, which he hath *filled with robbers*, who murder the English and depopulate the country, and that when the council of our lord the king attempts to take cognizance of the offence, he fulminates the sentence of excommunication against them. It is to be noted also, that the aforesaid Margaret has five times crossed the Irish sea. Wherefore she petitions for God's sake that the king's grace will have compassion, and that she may be permitted to take possession of her inheritance. It is further to be noted, that the aforesaid bishop hath been guilty of the death of many other Englishmen besides that of her father. And that the aforesaid Margaret hath

been guilty of the death of many other Englishmen besides that of her father. And that the aforesaid Margaret hath many times obtained writs of our lord the king, but to no effect, by reason of the influence and bribery of the said bishop. She further petitions for God's sake that she may have costs and damages, &c." From men of this description, even supposing the picture highly drawn, violent measures might be expected. It is not a subject of wonder therefore that irritated by the invasion of their rights by Italian and English ecclesiastics, they passed a bold and violent ordinance deciding that no man of the English nation should be admitted or received into a canonicate in any one of the Irish churches, nor could Henry repress this spirit but by his usual application to the pope, who in his bull addressed in consequence to the prelates and chapters of Ireland, represents their ordinance as the effect of envy and unchristian partiality, and a design to establish hereditary right in God's sanctuary, commanding that it should be formally rescinded within the space of one month, and in case of a refusal threatening to rescind it by the plenitude of his authority, and to commission the prelates of Dublin and Ossory to declare it in his name absolutely null and void. But this is not the only instance in which the daring spirit of the Irish ecclesiastics was displayed. Indefatigable in their encroachments on the civil power in strict consistency with the spirit pervading the hierarchy, and zealous in their attempts to extend their jurisdiction, they were sedulous in seeking occasions of dispute and litigation instead of promoting peace and smoothing asperities, artfully contriving to draw every suit into their own tribunals, but where the character of the litigant parties could

not upon the broadest construction be brought within their pale, the bishops found a pretext for their jurisdiction in the nature of the dispute. Spiritual causes alone it was agreed could appertain to the spiritual tribunal. But the word was indefinite, and according to the interpreters of the age, the church was always bound to prevent or chastise the commission of sin. By this comprehensive maxim the common differences of individuals generally involving some charge of wilful injury, devolved into the hands of a clerical judge.

“Ecclesiastical tribunals took cognizance,” says Hallam, “of breaches of contract, at least where an oath had been pledged, and of personal trusts, they had not only an exclusive jurisdiction over questions immediately matrimonial, but also took the execution of testaments into their hands, on account of the legacies to pious uses which testators were advised to bequeath. They pretended a right to supply the defects, the doubts, or the negligence of temporal judges, and invented a class of mixed causes whereof the lay or ecclesiastical jurisdiction took possession according to priority. Besides this extensive authority in civil disputes, they judged of some offences which naturally belong to the criminal law as well as of some others which participate of a civil and criminal nature. Such were perjury, sacrilege, usury, &c. from the punishment of all which the secular magistrate refrained, at least in England and Ireland, after they had become the province of a separate jurisdiction. Excommunication still continued the only chastisement which the church could directly inflict. But the bishops acquired a right of having their own prisons for lay offenders, and monasteries were the appropriate prisons of clerks. Their sentences of excommunication were

enforced of necessity by the temporal magistrate with imprisonment or sequestration of effects, in some cases with confiscation or death."

An instance of the assertion of this self constituted power, presents itself in the historical annals of this reign occurring in Ireland. Stephen Songspee, the king's own *natural* brother, was excommunicated with all his train by an archbishop of Dublin, and another instance is also recorded of the assumption of a bishop of Ferns, who excommunicated the great and good earl of Pembroke on the pretence that he had disseized his church of two manors. On the decease of this earl the bishop appeared before the king to claim those manors. Henry ordered him to free the remains of the earl from the sentence and to pronounce that of absolution at his tomb. The prelate attended the king thither, and in his presence had the audacity to pronounce with affected dignity and solemnity, "O William, thou that here liest wrapped in the bonds of excommunication, if what thou hast injuriously taken away be restored by the king, or thy heir, or thy friends, with competent satisfaction, I absolve thee. Otherwise, I ratify the sentence, that being wrapped in thy sins thou mayest remain damned in hell for ever." As the heir would not give up the manors in dispute, the bishop confirmed his curse! and the superstitious vulgar were taught to believe that the earl and his four brothers died without issue by the immediate sentence of heaven, in confirmation of that pronounced by its minister. What a strong and affecting instance is this of the power of superstition to prostrate in the soul of man all that is rational, and noble and liberal! It is well known to the readers of English history that the contest respecting bastardy took place about the eighteenth year of this reign. By

the *common* law children born before wedlock were adjudged incapable of inheriting as illegitimate, but the *canon* law pronounced the contrary. In consequence of this discrepancy of opinion, when the spiritual courts were directed by writ to try the legitimacy of any suitor, their sentence was in direct opposition to that of the realm. Hence, the civil courts were compelled to alter the nature of their writs, and confined the clergy to a simple enquiry whether the party had been born before or after wedlock. The indignant prelates complained of this innovation of their rights, and imperiously demanded in a parliament held at Merton, that the common law should be reduced to a conformity with the canon, not the latter be made to give way to the former. The answer they received deserves record, as marking the spirited decision of the English nobility, and proving that the constitution had assumed a more liberal character than it possessed antecedent to granting magna charta, inducing a manly assertion of positive and national rights, a spirit which although it might be inherently possessed had at least been long in abeyance.

Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari marks the inflexible spirit of the noble judges of this question. In Ireland a similar contest subsisted, and an application was made to the king's courts in England, to decide the point, as well as some others, where the real nature and purport of the common law were not clearly defined. The famous statute of Merton was therefore transmitted into Ireland, for the direction of the king's subjects, and the regulation of their judicial proceedings in that kingdom. The exactions made on the Irish clergy were so far from humbling their pride, and subduing their spirit, that on the contrary, they were the means of increasing their

turbulence and presumption. To keep them in any degree of temper while he extorted sums from them, Henry found it necessary to profess the greatest zeal for the defence of their rights and liberties. With this insincere policy the civil power was directed to give the same support to their sentence of excommunication as was allowed to the clergy in England. Accordingly, this dire instrument of ecclesiastical vengeance was levelled without mercy against all who presumed to dispute their authority, or oppose their pretensions. They even carried this inordinate abuse of spiritual authority to such lengths, that the pope, probably anticipating the disgust it must occasion, was obliged to interpose to restrict it. But the oppressions they endured drove them to make reprisals on the laity, and under the specious names of oblations of the faithful, extravagant impositions were exacted. The magistrates and citizens of Dublin presumed to remonstrate, and ventured to circumscribe the revenues of their cathedral. The interference roused the indignation of the clergy, and the archbishop immediately fulminated a solemn excommunication against the sacrilegious invaders of his church, and also laid the city under an interdict; Cardinal Ottoben confirming the tremendous sentence. The citizens again remonstrated, and the cause received a formal hearing before the lord deputy and council. The clergy, however, proved triumphant, and the citizens were reduced to an abject and mortifying compromise. It was settled, that in case of any open or notorious offence, in which that of opposition to the church was of course included, a commutation for the first time should be made in money, for the second, that the offenders should be (the relater hesitates to name the humiliation) *culdged* round the church,

for the third, that the same discipline should be repeated publicly, at the head of a procession, and that in case of further obstinacy, they should be either disfranchised, or cudgelled round the city! What are we to think of that community, one portion of which could propose, and another submit to such a compromise?

Nothing can show in a stronger point of view the mischief of the perverted political and moral principles of the age, which made light of the validity of oaths, and allowed that a papal dispensation might annul any prior engagement, than the conduct of Henry himself on several occasions, although he was deemed a devout man, and was punctual in his observances of public worship. His well known solemn ratification of the great charter is a memorable instance of insincerity, and of the presumption to which a certainty of priestly absolution will lead an individual, as well as the inefficacy of outward ceremonies, however solemn, to produce any permanent or salutary effect upon the heart; and surely we may infer from the little influence of the Romish religion on the conduct, (of course, we speak generally,) although its splendid or solemn forms may powerfully raise and exalt the imagination, it is far from taking a strong hold of it. What can be imagined more impressive than the occurrence to which we have alluded. "All the prelates and abbots," says Hume, "were assembled, they held burning tapers in their hands; Magna Charta was read before them; they denounced sentence of excommunication against every one who should thenceforth violate that fundamental law. They threw their tapers on the ground, and exclaimed, 'May the soul of every one who incurs this sentence so stink and corrupt in hell.' The king bore a part in this

ceremony, and subjoined, ' So help me God, I will keep all these articles inviolate, as I am a man, as I am a Christian, as I am a knight, and as I am a king crowned and anointed.'” Yet was this tremendous ceremony no sooner finished, than the favourites of the irresolute and facile Henry made him return to the same arbitrary and irregular administration he had thus virtually renounced, and the reasonable expectations of his people were perpetually eluded and disappointed. It was in the miserable condition to which this disregard of true faith reduced the kingdom, that the aid of the commons of the realm was required. It was on January 20, 1265, that this parliament was called, forming the first outline of our present House of Commons, justly deemed the bulwark of British liberty.

While the most important transactions were taking place in the political world, the papal power yet supported itself. The pope exacted the revenues of all vacant benefices, the twentieth of all ecclesiastical revenues without exception, and the third of such as exceeded one hundred marks per annum, as well as the half of such as were possessed by non-residents. He claimed the goods of all intestate clergymen, and pretended a title to all monies obtained by usury ;* benevolences were also levied upon the people. Although sunk in the deepest abyss of superstition and ignorance, these evils were so felt and considered, that it would appear serious thoughts began to be entertained by society to relieve it-

* Interest had mounted to such an enormous height, instances occur of fifty per cent. paid for money. The sufferings of the Jews were dreadful, yet such was their love of

money, that they were tempted, by the exorbitant interest allowed, to remain where they were, the victims of the most grievous oppressions.

self of the yoke of papal despotism; and the Roman pontiff was obliged to devise new expedients, to fix it securely upon the Christian world. For this purpose it was that Gregory VII. published what are called his decretals. These consisted of a collection of forgeries, favourable to the usurpations of the court of Rome, a compilation of supposed decrees of popes in the first centuries. Absurd and contradictory as they were, they passed for authentic in the dark period of the thirteenth century, and men, entangled in the mazes of false literature, and the philosophy equally false then prevailing, had no internal armour to defend themselves, except some feeble rays of common sense among a few, which, however, passed for profaneness and impiety among the votaries of a religion of mere form and convenience, calling itself Christian, but destitute of the spirit which alone could entitle it to that high distinction.

CHAPTER VIII.

Decease of Henry III.—Accession of Edward I.—Ireland not essentially improved—Maurice Fitz-Maurice governor—Country embroiled with civil dissensions, increased by Scottish marauders—Thomas de Clare receives grants of land, passes over to Ireland—Impolicy of such grants—Contests with the new comers—Disadvantageous situation of the Irish—Petition of the Irish—The answer—Non-concurrence of those to whom final decision was submitted—Bitter jealousies and feuds prevail—Richard de Burgo, his oppressive measures—Exactions of the king—The Irish appeal to the pope—The king waives his demand—William de Vesey entrusted with the government—Dissensions not easily quieted—Vigorous government of Sir John Wogan—A more regular parliament than hitherto convened—More pacific temper prevails—Severe exactions of Edward, even the pope appears to fear him—Irish nobles join the army against the Scots—Insurrections in Ireland—Edward opposes the presumptions of the papacy—Refuses his homage to the pope—His death a calamity—The partiality of Edward II. to an individual of temporary service to Ireland—He appoints Gaveston to the government of Ireland—He is received with favour, and admired for his showy qualities—He excites the jealousy of the Irish lords—Earl of Ulster becomes his rival—They hold different courts—Frivolous subjects of dispute—Invasion by Robert Bruce—Distress and suffering occasioned by it.—Papacy takes part in the contest—Robert and Edward Bruce excommunicated—Irish send emissaries to Rome stating their distresses and oppressions of the English government—Pope exhorts Edward to leniency—The distress of the country extreme, famine and pestilence desolate it—Two archbishops administer the government, and Prelate of Armagh endeavours to rouse the spirit of his country against the invaders—And takes part with the English—Scots defeated—Effects of the war—Insufficiency of law to restrain excesses—English interest declines in Ireland—Clergy refuse to comply with the king's exactions—Edward endeavours to take refuge in Ireland—Demoralized state of the times—Clergy endeavour to check the vices and disorders of the realm, by encouragement of learning—Endeavour to establish an university—Conduct of Bishop of Ossory—

Charges of heresy—Attempts made to stem the torrent of papal corruption—Canons—Statute of provisos—The respect paid to the pontiff diminishes—Literature improves—Rapid march of mind—Richard Fitzraf opposes the pretensions of the friars—He is cited before the pope, and persecuted for his bold opinions—Died in exile—Considerable ardour prevails in literary pursuits—Restoration of the civil, and formation of the canon law conducive to it—Scholastic philosophy—Zeal for ancient learning—Science is encouraged by princes—Public libraries formed—Ecclesiastical corruption—Remarks of Bernard, a proof of the mental energies of men having been roused.

AT the period when Henry III., worn out by the cares of his reign, and the infirmities of age, paid the debt of nature, his gallant son, Edward, was absent in the Holy Land; and on his accession to the throne, 1272, we do not find the state of Ireland essentially improved, for he appears to have considered other arenas for the display of his political and military talents more worthy his attention, although, as lord of Ireland, he ought, at least, to have been aware of the disorders and grievances that pervaded the land, to rectify which would have been a worthy exercise of his discernment, and other eminent qualities.

The administration of the government had, some time previous to the death of Henry, been vested in Maurice Fitz-Maurice; on the demise of Henry, Fitz-Maurice received a formal letter from his successor, notifying his accession, and containing the usual commands to preserve the peace, &c., and requiring the usual oaths from the liege subjects. But these formal acts had no power to controul, or to intimidate the violent and disaffected; the very seat of government was insulted; the country was embroiled in civil dissensions, while petty factions, composed of English as well as Irish, pursued their individual schemes of in-

terest or revenge, in utter defiance to all legal restraint; and to add to the general confusion, the nation was infested by marauders from the Scottish isles, who, in the state of domestic anarchy, carried on their depredations with impunity.

In this state of things, Thomas de Clare, son of the Earl of Gloucester, who had married a daughter of the Geraldines, a young lord of martial spirit, received from Edward grants of land in Thomond, and led a powerful train of followers into Ireland to support his claim. Such grants, in the unquiet and jealous state of Ireland, were impolitic, as they greatly provoked the pride, and roused the resentment of the native Irish, who were, by these colonists, driven from their possessions. Contests followed the arrival of de Clare and his warlike train, and the result of fierce hostilities was the defeat and overthrow of De Clare. This young noble represented his situation, and Edward issued his mandate to the prelates of Ireland, to interpose their spiritual authority to allay and compose the animosities which existed. He had scarcely done this, when intelligence of civil war in Munster, and insurrections in Connaught reached him. Provoked by these multiplied aggressions, he indignantly recalled to England the chief governor, who had succeeded Fitz-Maurice. The government was entrusted, during his absence, to the inefficient hands of a friar; the disaffected took advantage of it to renew their outrages. Having succeeded, however, in satisfying the king, who, intent upon what he deemed more important designs, readily listened to any thing which tended to divest his mind of Irish disturbances, the recalled governor was again remanded to his post, to repress the commotions created by his absence.

This unhappy state of affairs was most sensibly felt by those Irish, who by their local situation held constant intercourse with the English, as they laboured under the manifold disadvantages of being confined to their ancient legal institutions, and hence the security of their lives and properties was more precarious than that of their English neighbours, while at the same time they were destitute of similar remedies. All hope of expelling the invaders had been long resigned, and the only alternative of security against their lawless oppressions appeared to be the acquisition of the rights and privileges, enjoyed by those with whom they were necessarily connected; and to convert their state of vassals and tributaries to the King of England, into that of subjects, amenable to his laws, and claimants of its privileges. An application was accordingly made to Ufford, the chief governor, and eight thousand marks were offered to the king, provided he would grant the enjoyment of the laws of England to the Irish inhabitants, (meaning those within what is called the English pale.) A petition thus drawn from an oppressed people was favourably received by Edward, who, where his aspiring ambition did not fatally interpose, was a friend to justice.

We extract the answer to this petition from the pages of Leland.

“Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to our trusty and well-beloved Robert de Ufford, Justiciary of Ireland, greeting. The improvement of the state and peace of our land of Ireland, signified to us by your letter, gives us exceeding joy and pleasure. We entirely commend your diligence in this matter, hoping (by the divine assistance) that the things there so happily

begun by you, shall, as far as in you lieth, be prosecuted with the greater vigour and success.

“ And whereas the community of Ireland hath made a tender to us of eight thousand marks, on condition that we grant to them the laws of England, to be used in the aforesaid land ; we will you to know, that inasmuch as the laws used by the Irish are hateful to God, and repugnant to justice, and having held diligent conference, and full deliberation with our council on this matter ; it seems sufficiently expedient to us and our council to grant to them the English laws ; provided always that the general consent of our people, or at least of the prelates and nobles of that land well affected to us, shall uniformly concur in this behalf.

“ We therefore command you, that having entered into treaty with these Irish people, and examined diligently into the wills of our commons, prelates, and nobles, well affected to us in this behalf, and having agreed between you and them, on the highest fine of money that you can obtain, to be paid us on this account, you do with the consent of all, at least of the greater and sounder part thereof, make such composition with the said people in the premises, as you shall judge in your diligence to be most expedient for our honour and interest. Provided however, that these people should hold in readiness a body of good and stout footmen, amounting to such a number as you shall agree upon with them for one turn, only, to repair to us when we shall think fit to demand them.”

We may remark upon the first clause of this document, how difficult it is for a monarch to learn a correct state of affairs, through the medium of official channels ; and in the last, we have an evidence of the oppressive nature of

ambition, and the facility with which it renders circumstances subservient to its desires. The Irish were to pay dear for their privileges. Still, however, the rectitude and policy of Edward appear in his granting the prayer of the petition, and had his permission been seconded by those to whom he left the decision, the benefits resulting might, in all probability, have been great and permanent. Yet, notwithstanding the application was renewed, and the king used every just means to effect it; his royal mandate was evaded by the more insidious artifices and mean subterfuges of those, who should have eagerly seconded a measure obviously calculated to effect the most pacific ends. But the selfish principle interposed. The measure, if carried into effect, would have circumscribed their rapacious views, and controuled their violence and oppression; hence it was denounced as visionary and impracticable.

Thus disappointed in their wishes of becoming peaceable and useful British subjects, it was natural that the Irish should become irritated to a high degree, that their resentments should become more bitter, their jealousies and contests more fierce. They assumed arms, but destitute of power, union, and discretion, to form any effectual confederacy, their insurrections only served to ravage the districts exposed, to raise direful but temporary confusion, or to cover some act of individual revenge.

In the lust of power and possessions, the English lords and principal settlers had become bitter enemies to each other, evidenced by continual acts of bloodshed. These civil broils were multiplied, and for some years remained even unnoticed by the government. The death of three great English lords, however, nearly at the same period, 1286, left Richard de Burgo, Earl of

Ulster, in an undisputed rank of eminence. The power, thus devolved as it were upon one who could have exercised it for good, produced no salutary effect, as it was fatally employed in oppressing and destroying all those who stood in the way of an insatiable ambition, and presuming upon the various engagements of his royal master, he pursued his aspiring course uncontrolled.

The confusion in Ireland little corresponded with the good intentions in which we will believe Edward sincere towards that disturbed country, still less were they favourable to the necessities produced by his love of power, and extended dominion. He had already, by the assistance and interposition of the pope, obtained a tenth of their revenues from the Irish clergy, on the fashionable pretence of providing for an expedition to the Holy Land. But he now resolved, by his own sole authority, to try raising a further supply, before he ventured the experiment in England. In his own name, therefore, he demanded an additional fifteenth of all the spiritualities in Ireland. The clergy were neither disposed to meet this demand, nor indeed were they able to comply. They appealed to Rome for protection, pleading to the pontiff against this royal encroachment on his supreme authority. At the same time, they humbly represented to Edward their total inability to meet his demand; peremptorily refusing compliance with the requisition. The king did not go to the extremities he subsequently did with his English clergy; he waived for the present his demand, and applied to the Irish laity of Ireland, and from them, after some altercation and delay, obtained a fifteenth of their effects.

Upon the pretext of quieting the commotions of the kingdom, but really to enforce these demands, William de Vesey, an English lord, was

entrusted with the government of Ireland. Endowed with a fearless spirit, and great activity, united with an inflexible and rigid temper, this noble seemed admirably fitted to administer the government of such a disordered state. He succeeded in composing the fierce spirits of the Irish insurgents; but when he attempted to strike at the root of the public evils, by endeavouring to repress the violences of the great English lords, he provoked their animosity, which was followed by accusation and recrimination, one party alleging that the other had departed from allegiance, and the other accusing his adversary of sedition and disloyalty. According to the martial spirit of the age, the combat was demanded and accepted, the day appointed; but before it arrived, the king, informed of the contest, summoned the parties to appear before him at Westminster, where, after various pleadings and adjournments, the whole process was annulled as informal, and Vesey resigned his possessions to the king. Thus was the public interest disregarded in the asperities of individual jealousies, and malignant quarrels.

Had not the violence of passion and the corruption of manners been at this time irresistibly adverse to wise and judicious institutions, advantages of a high nature must have been derived to Ireland by the government of Sir John Wogan, who was appointed 1295. Possessing a temper and discretion, of which his predecessors had been destitute, his first care was to endeavour to compose the dissensions which existed, by conciliation and leniency. Two of the principal contending nobles consented, by his earnest conciliation, and powerful arguments, to enter into a truce during two years. This gave the governor some little time to attend to the general disorders. For this purpose, a parliament was more regularly

and effectually summoned than had hitherto been convened in Ireland. Many salutary ordinances of this assembly were devised with equity and propriety, tending to promote peace, unanimity, and concord. Just and proper as they were, they had but a partial influence on a people so degenerate and depraved, yet they undoubtedly gave a check to many disorders of the nation, and a more generally pacific disposition prevailed. The king, encouraged by this national improvement, ventured to repeat his application to the Irish clergy for a subsidy, but history is silent as to the result. The tenths formerly granted for the service of the Holy Land, and which the pope took upon him to collect, were seized by order of the king, in the hands of the Romish agents; and without scruple applied to the purposes of his government. This however, was not the first or only instance in which the lofty and enterprising Boniface had experienced the peremptory and inflexible temper of Edward. He attempted not to resist his resolution in the present case, venturing no further than a gentle expostulation, and declaring he made him a free present of the revenue of the tenths of which the king had possessed himself.

The renewed Scotch war obliged the aspiring Edward to have recourse to every expedient to strengthen and support himself; and in consequence of his Irish subjects being enjoined to assist him, several Irish nobles and their followers joined his standard, and distinguished themselves in the field. But the absence of these lords produced a bad effect in their fickle countrymen; a licentious spirit of insurrection again manifested itself, and some of the finest and most valuable of the English settlements were desolated by incursions. The disorder reached even the seat of

government, and the most vigorous measures could scarcely preserve its security.

Although Edward oppressed the church with grievous extortions, he was resolute in his opposition to the usurpations of the Romish see, and even the lofty minded Boniface seems to have stood in awe of him. Edward had always paid with reluctance the tribute of one thousand marks, stipulated by John for himself and successors, suffering the arrears to run on for several successive years; but the stipulated homage he never would yield, and the pope, it would appear, somewhat afraid to contend the point with his spirited vassal, did not insist upon the performance of this humiliating ceremony. There were many occasions during the reign of Edward I., in which his arbitrary principles and impetuous temper pushed him to the brink of danger, but he likewise saw his error in time to retrieve it, and by his vigour and abilities saved himself and the nation, and kept every one in awe; converting materials which, perhaps, under any other monarch, would have ignited the beacon of war, into measures of individual and national advantage.

The loss, therefore, of this prince was sensibly felt, and men looked anxiously towards his successor, that he might be found possessed of some of the popular qualities of his father. But weak in understanding, and infirm in will, Edward II. was equally incapable of giving honour to his throne, or to promote or secure the welfare and prosperity of his dominions. The partiality however of the young king to an individual, who proved unworthy of the distinction, proved of some momentary service to Ireland. When a powerful combination of the nobility peremptorily required the banishment of the unworthy Gaveston,

ton, a demand even enforced by parliament, the king, obliged to yield, instead of dismissing his minion to France, his native land, gave dignity to his exile, by appointing him vicegerent of Ireland, vested with power to give eclat to his government. The exterior graces of Gaveston attracted the attention and won the regards of a people, among whom his native pride had as yet made no personal enemies. The princely port and magnificent retinue of the new governor, captivated the eyes of those who loved display, and the vigour and high spirit of his actions, his gallant appearance, and engaging manners, seconded by his liberalities, perfectly won the hearts of the soldiers, and he proceeded successfully in the affairs of his high station. But the consequence and dignity he thus gave to his government, excited the jealousy of the Irish lords; Gaveston, therefore, soon found he was surrounded by rivals, amongst the proudest of whom was Richard, Earl of Ulster. The insolent pride which had rendered Gaveston so hateful to the English barons, was instantly aroused, when he found an individual affecting a state equal to his own. Each with a paltry rivalry, unworthy of men, and particularly statesmen, attempted to excel the other in parade and splendour. The earl held a court at *Trim* with great ostentation, and even so far affected royalty, as to confer knighthood on two young noblemen, and it is asserted that he even threatened Gaveston with open hostilities.

However, before these ill-timed jealousies could produce any serious effects, the favourite was recalled, and the government was again left in imbecility and confusion. Sir John Wogan succeeded to the administration, but the laws he ordained he had no power to enforce upon a people become so corrupt. We may form some

judgment of the perverted principles of the times, and the frivolous things which they dignified as essentials in religion, by the fact, that the Irish parliaments judged it a subject of great moment to agitate seriously, a contest for precedence between the prelates of Armagh and Dublin, and to deliberate whether a bishop should have his crosier borne erect or depressed in some particular districts. This affair had been deemed of such importance, that it was contested in the usual manner, with violence and bloodshed; nor was it determined till the King of England moderated between the parties.

It is not the province of this work to enter into the detail of the invasion of Ireland by Robert Bruce, which, at a period when some degree of tranquillity was restored to the nation, by the union of two illustrious hostile families, again reduced it to the extremities of distress and suffering. It is necessary, however, to state, that the success which had attended the arms of Bruce in Scotland, had by no means passed unnoticed by those Irish, who considered themselves allied to the Albanian Scots. Despising and hating the sovereign power in England, they felt mortified that the Scots should have anticipated them in throwing off the yoke, and that they had not availed themselves of the weakness and indolence of Edward the second, as a period fit for self emancipation. They applied to Robert Bruce, and the result was his sending to Ireland his brother Edward, who found many of the Irish toparchs ready to welcome him. Treachery and revolt pervaded the army, even among the English, and destruction marked the course of the invader, while secret disloyalty weakened the resisting power. In this state of things, the governor had ample employ to repress the Irish

insurgents in the very seat of government, and to apply the most effectual remedies in his power to the manifold distresses which the English had so long experienced as well as the Irish natives. His administration at this critical period was spirited, and so far effective, that the fortune of the invaders appeared to have received a check. The papacy took part in the contest, and a sentence of excommunication was thundered from Rome, against all the enemies of King Edward, in which sentence Robert and Edward Bruce were severally excommunicated by name. The same tremendous sentence was denounced against the Irish clergy of every order, who had preached with zeal to excite their countrymen to insurrection.

This interposition of the pontiff had been anticipated, and to guard against it, those Irish who had united with the invaders had taken the precaution to send emissaries to Rome with an affecting statement of the distress of their nation, and the oppressions of the English government. They recited the conditions on which Adrian had first permitted Henry the second to enter Ireland, but far from their having been fulfilled, they alleged that both Henry and his successors had loaded the unhappy victims of their power with continual oppressions and reduced them into such a miserable state of slavery that they were no longer able to endure their sufferings, and had been forced to withdraw themselves from such a cruel dominion, to invite another power to redress their wrongs and take the government of the kingdom. This remonstrance had so powerful an effect upon the holy father, that soon after his sentence of excommunication was promulged he transmitted it to king Edward accompanied with an earnest exhortation to weigh well the complaint and to re-

dress the grievances which had urged it. This application however, whatever might be the inclination of the king could not be attended with any immediate change. The distresses of the country and the invaders were horrible, famine pestilence and war raged throughout the wretched country: these calamities resulting from the evil passions of men, and forming their punishment, were with the true spirit of the times imputed as a judgment for the heinous sin of eating flesh in lent! At this period two archbishops namely of Cashel and of Dublin, successively administered the government, and when the English, well provided and appointed, and conducted by an able general, were sent to exterminate the invaders who had so severely harassed and distressed the nation, we find the prelate of Armagh a zealous partizan of the English interests, going through the ranks exhorting the men to behave valourously against the enemies of their nation, distributing his benedictions, and pronouncing absolution on all those who should fall in a cause so just and honourable. This zeal animated to fresh vigour the fearless bravery of the English, the conflict was tremendous and sustained by both parties with equal valour, it terminated in the defeat of the Scots whose leader fell. The English leader Sir John Birmingham first expelled from his territory the chief Irish support of the Scots, and led back his victorious troops receiving for the reward of his high services the earldom of Louth and manor of Athendee. But unhappily for Ireland, although the invader had thus fallen a victim to his rash enterprize, the effects of the war he had enkindled died not with him. In periods of such general commotion, however wisely laws may be framed or equitably administered, they are little effective to restrain

the violences or vindicate the injuries of society. But even could they have this salutary power in periods of anarchy like that we have noticed, Ireland enjoyed it not, the very source of public justice was poisoned by the distinction maintained between the Irish feudary and the English subject. The different modes of jurisdiction by which each was governed, every succeeding day lamentably demonstrated (by the most miserable effects), as well as the baseness and wickedness of those who had favoured this evil and infatuated policy. The evil was most severely felt during the Scottish invasion, and an ordinance was made to relieve it in some degree, as it was enacted that all the Irish who had received, or should receive charters of denization were for the future to be strictly obedient to, and protected by, the English laws which ordained felony to be punished capitally.

The English interest however from various concurring causes, into an explanation of which we cannot enter, sensibly declined in Ireland during the disorderly reign of Edward the second, and in the state of distress to which the nation was reduced, it may be imagined few resources could be found, or would have been sought, to minister to the necessities of England. Yet the attempt on Scotland in 1322, was made the pretext for calling off those forces from Ireland, for which there was there so much need against domestic enemies. The pope also apparently forgetful of the pathetic remonstrances of his Irish children, granted to the king a tenth of all the English revenues in Ireland for two years. To the first order the laity were obedient, and the troops proceeded to Scotland. But the clergy were refractory yet well knowing that they had to contend with those who were not to be influenced by reasons of

equity and humanity, they neither pleaded distress nor inability, they had recourse to evasion, demanding the pope's original bull, and as this was not produced they refused to pay the subsidy. This act of disobedience however would not have been ventured upon, had not the wretched state of England at the time encouraged the refusers. The horrible scenes that passed there we know ended in the ruin and barbarous death of the unhappy Edward; to whom was unjustly imputed the misfortunes which afflicted his kingdom.

Edward in the extremity of his distress made a fruitless effort to throw himself into the arms of his Irish subjects. But the triumph of his enemies was complete. Among the articles of accusation urged against the king, they insulted him with the loss of his dominions in Ireland. In delineating the manners of this unhappy period of history we must be sensible that the odious vices and lawless violences which disgraced Ireland also equally disgraced England. They were in fact vices of the times, not mere individual excesses. Perhaps of the two the Irish state of morals was the more pardonable, as temptations were frequent and government less respectable. The church was not inactive in this deplorable order of things. Some prelates of Ireland laboured with a spirit perfectly consistent with their sacred function, to give a check to the vices and disorders of the realm, by the encouragement of learning. Two successive archbishops of Dublin, had in the reign of Edward the second, laboured to establish an university in Dublin, not only for the study of theology, but that of the civil and canon law, the then fashionable part of literature in Europe. The pontificate, to which they applied, readily granted its sanction, and in 1320 archbishop Brick-

nor proceeded to erect and model an academical body in Dublin, in which degrees were conferred and studies so long continued that Edward the third enlarged the original endowment, and by special writ granted his protection and safe conduct to the students thirty eight years after the first establishment of this seminary. The period of distress and anarchy however was most unfavourable to the laudable undertaking. The institution languished for some years in the midst of dissension and disorder and at length expired.

“ And at the very time ” says the historian of whose pages we so largely avail ourselves “ when this upright and ingenuous prelate was exerting himself for the improvement and refinement of his country, the cause of ignorance and barbarism was not without its abettors, and that even among his own order.” Richard Ledred Bishop of Ossory, an individual possessing violent passions, and a proud vindictive spirit raised by an extraordinary act of persecution a scene of confusion in his diocese which soon created a great sensation throughout the Island.

A person of some distinction called Alice Ketler, with her son and some of her dependents were accused of witchcraft in the spiritual court of Ossory. One of these dependents was condemned and executed, the son imprisoned, and Alice herself though no charge could be clearly established against her, yet on an accusation of heresy, was tried convicted and condemned to the flames. Arnold de la Poer one of the magistrates of Kilkenny who espoused the cause of these unhappy culprits was also charged with heresy by the Bishop, he appealed to the chief justice, the prior of Kilmainham who countenanced and protected him. The prelate instantly extended his accusation to the justice who now found it diffi-

cult to secure himself, and left his wretched client de la Poer to expire in prison. Thus was a new weapon found to execute the private revenge of individuals, a new and horrid evil added to those already experienced in unhappy Ireland. Heresy that undefined term of horror involving every sin, struck awe even into the hearts of those who were continually breaking through every sacred bond of honour, outraging every feeling of humanity. The oppressor, the ravager, the murderer, each were zealous to approve themselves true sons of the church, and ready to execute her vengeance on all her enemies. A person of considerable family in Leinster named Adam Duff was violently seized and burnt for heresy. His offence was aggravated by a charge of horrid and senseless blasphemy: just as Ketler had her sacramental wafer impressed with the devil's name, and an ointment to convert her staff into a witch's vehicle. At length the mischief thus spread abroad, reverted upon its author. The bishop of Ossory himself was by his metropolitan formally accused of heresy and obliged to make a precipitate retreat. He appealed to the apostolic see, and freed his country from the consequences of his folly and superstition, called into operation to favour personal animosity and revenge, but it is to be feared that he had awakened a spark which was ready to flame when circumstances afforded fuel to cherish it. Many attempts were made at the period of which we now speak to stem the torrent of papal corruption, even so early as the conclusion of the thirteenth century a national synod had been held at London which undertook to reform the ecclesiastical abuses which prevailed. This synod in which the Welsh, Scotch and Irish clergymen were present as well as those of England was regarded as a great authority for

subsequent measures, and for a just rule of discipline in the church. Several of its canons are even still in use forming part of the canon law. The ninth canon provides against the evil of non-residence, obliging the incumbent presented to a benefice to resign other preferment and to reside. The twentieth provides against commutations for offences, and forbids the archdeacon even to receive money on such accounts; for "such practices," say the synod, "amount in effect to the grant of a licence for sin." The principal European nations indeed appeared although with different degrees of energy to make a stand against the despotism of Rome. In this resistance England was not only the first engaged but the most consistent. Edward the third by his statute of provisos secured the rights of patrons and electors of livings against the claims of the papal see, and with his usual vigour outlawed those who should dare to appeal to Rome; further measures tending to repress the interference of Rome were also adopted, especially the great statute of præmunire, which subjects all persons bringing papal bulls for translation of bishops and other enumerated purposes into the kingdom, to the penalties of forfeiture and perpetual imprisonment.

This act combined with the statute of provisos put a stop to the pope's usurpation of patronage, which had impoverished the church and state for the space of two centuries. The laity appear at this time greatly prejudiced against the papal power, this growing dislike, and opening conviction, was evidenced in endless complaints. "The parliament pretended" says Hume, "that the usurpations of the pope were the cause of all the plagues, injuries, famine and poverty of the realm, were more destructive to it than all the wars, and were the reason why it contained not a third of the inhabi-

tants and commodities which it formerly possessed. That the taxes paid to him exceeded five times those which were paid to the king, that every thing was venal in that sinful city of Rome, and that even the patrons in England had thence learned to practice simony without remorse or scruple. At another time they petition the king to employ no churchman in any office of state, and they even speak in plain terms of expelling by force the papal authority and thereby providing against oppressions which they neither could nor would any longer endure." Men in fact began to despise the pontiffs on account of their disputes about dominion, and thought of committing the keeping of their souls to God alone, and even to admit it as a maxim that the prosperity of the church and the interests of religion might be maintained, secured and promoted without a visible head, crowned with spiritual supremacy. This was effecting a great march in mental decision, in that dark age, and here we may clearly trace the germs of reformation beginning to vegetate. That they appeared perhaps more vigorous in England than elsewhere may be attributed to the hostility to the clergy, arising from the dissemination of the principles of Wickliffe. Some of the popes sensible of the depravity of the monks endeavoured to reform them, but disorders were become too inveterate to admit of much remedy. The two principal orders of the mendicants, viz. the Dominicans and Franciscans were at the head of the monastic orders and were indeed become the heads of the church, so extensive was the influence they had acquired that all matters of consequence, both in the court of Rome and in the cabinets of princes, were carried on under their influence and dominion. The multitude over whom they sedulously used every art

to fix their empire had such an exalted notion of these monks, and of their credit with the Supreme Being that numbers of both sexes, some in health, others infirm, earnestly desired to be admitted into the mendicant order, which they regarded as a sure and infallible method of rendering them acceptable to Heaven. They suffered therefore apparently but little from these various attacks, being resolutely protected against all opposition whether secret or open by the pontiffs, who justly regarded them as their best friends and most effectual supports. But while that ardent desire for temporal sway which prompted the papal measures of usurpation, seemed for a time to reap its gratification, it insensibly but surely impaired the essential constituents of papal authority. The overweening anxiety of the popes respecting the mere politics of the world and their own territory degraded, their dignity in the eyes of men. The veil woven by religious awe was gradually removed, and the common features of ordinary ambition appeared without disguise. And as the cupidity of the clergy in regard to worldly estate, had lessened every where the reverence in which they had been held, so the similar conduct of their head undermined the respect felt for him, and that even in the immediate seat of his power. The censures of the church, those direful excommunications and tremendous interdicts which had kept Europe in trembling awe; became gradually little regarded when they were found to be fulminated in every petty contention for territory. "The papal interdicts of the fourteenth century" observes Hallam, "wore a different complexion from those of former times." Though tremendous to the imagination they had hitherto been confined to spiritual effects, or to such as were connected with religion, such as the prohibition of marriage

and sepulture, but were now extended to secular things. Literature, long the passive handmaid of spiritual despotism began to assert her nobler energies by ministering to truth: mankind were taught to investigate and scrutinize what had hitherto been received with implicit respect; and such was the ardour for study, that we are informed the universities were crowded with students; thirty thousand are stated in that of Oxford alone. "What was the occupation of all these young men?" enquires Hume, "to learn very bad Latin and still worse logic," but that there were very many exceptions to this sweeping assertion, no candid mind can doubt. Among the most eminent professors of this age was Richard Fitzraf, an Irishman. He was educated at Oxford, and promoted by Edward the third to the see of Armagh. He greatly distinguished himself by opposing the pretensions of the mendicant orders, who armed with papal authority encroached on the rites observed by the secular clergy, and prevented them from the exercise of godly discipline. "I have" this eminent prelate observes "in my diocese of Armagh about two thousand persons who stand condemned by the censures of the church, denounced every year against murderers, thieves, and such like malefactors, of all which number scarcely fourteen have applied to me or my clergy for absolution, yet all receive the sacraments as others do, because they are *absolved* or pretend to be *absolved by friars*." Nor was this the only point in which Fitzraf opposed the mendicants, he condemned and withstood their practice of begging, and maintained it was every man's duty to support himself by honest labour, that it forms no part of Christian wisdom and holiness for men to profess themselves mendicants. That to subsist by begging ought to be matter of

necessity, not choice. That the Son of God as he never taught such doctrines, so he never practised them in his own person, and that although he was always poor when on earth, he never was a beggar.

Do we not see in these sentiments vigorous germs of that reformation, which was silently maturing itself in the hearts and opinions of men? Striking as they did at the very root of the pretended sanctity of the friars, they aroused every vindictive feeling against the bold individual who dared to promulgate them. Enraged to find the very practice they gloried in as exemplifying their extraordinary virtue, represented as in its own nature even unlawful, the prelate who had dared to utter such opinions was cited by the friars to appear before Innocent the sixth, and to give an account of his doctrine. The archbishop obeyed the summons, and in the presence of the pope defended at large, and with ability, the rights of parochial ministers against the intrusions of the mendicants, exposing the various enormities of the latter. What effect his defence and arguments had upon the mind of the pontiff, we are not informed. It is certain, however, that this bold professor of a doctrine so unpalatable to the holy see, was persecuted both by the civil and ecclesiastical powers, and underwent a variety of hardships.

In a certain meditation or prayer Fitzraf describes the outline of his own life, and particularly declares how the Lord had instructed him, and brought him out of the vain subtilties of Aristotle to the study of the holy scriptures. The beginning of this prayer is given by Fox, and is as follows: "To thee be praise, glory and thanksgiving, O Jesus, most holy, most powerful, most amiable, who hast said, 'I am the way

the truth and the life,' a way without observation, truth without a cloud, and a life without end. For thou hast shewn me the way, thou hast taught me thy truth, and thou hast promised me life. Thou wast my way in exile, thou wast my truth in council, and thou wilt be my life in reward." This eminent Irish prelate was seven or eight years in exile and died in that state, having defended his tenets with fidelity and firmness, both by his discourses and writings, till the period which robbed the world of his virtuous example. Of his refutation of the reigning abuses the account is ample, of his Christian spirit, doctrine and sufferings the account is brief, but sufficiently diffuse to prove that the materials were ample, had it been consistent with the religious prejudices and genius of the age to have moulded them into form.

In regard to the literature of this period a considerable ardour prevailed: from the latter part of the eleventh century, intellectual pursuits seem gradually to have acquired estimation. In the reign of our second Henry, Oxford became a flourishing university, and we have seen that Dublin was also a seat of learning which under happier national auspices might have rivalled its English sister. A large proportion of the students in most of these institutions were drawn from foreign countries by the love of science, the universities being each distinguished for their peculiar line of study. Endowments and privileges were liberally bestowed upon these institutions particularly in the three last of the middle ages, hence the spirit which had first led to their establishment was kept alive and gained continual accession of ardour. "This almost sudden (in the first instance) transition from an almost total indifference to all intellectual pursuits cannot'

says Hallam, "be ascribed to any general causes. Yet the restoration of the civil, and the formation of the canon law, were certainly eminently conducive to it, and a large proportion of the students confined themselves to jurisprudence. But the chief attraction was the scholastic theology." The love of disputation is natural to an acute understanding. Mystery and speculation seem congenial to the human mind, and are an evidence of its eternal essence. It is foreign to our plan, and far beyond our ability to enter into a discussion of this philosophy, or even to name those distinguished scholars who professed and taught it. It was ultimately proved really to be a waste of the faculties which were "in endless mazes lost;" wisdom was promised to reward the research but it eluded the eager inquirer. "After three or four hundred years," says the interesting historian we have quoted above, "the scholastics had not untied a single knot, nor added one unequivocal truth to the domain of philosophy. As this became evident the enthusiasm for that kind of learning declined, and after the middle of the fourteenth century few distinguished teachers arose among the schoolmen, and at the revival of letters, their pretended science had few advocates left, but among the prejudiced or ignorant adherents of established systems." It cannot be doubted however that the exercise of the understanding necessary in these researches after truth, however futile the attempt to arrive at it by that intricate path, strengthened the intellectual powers of men and prepared them for a wider range, the very futility of their attempts stimulated the intellect to search for a more secure anchorage, and about the period which we now review, that anchorage appears at least to be in some degree found. An ardent zeal for the restoration of

ancient learning began to display itself. Princes and nobles became more attentive and attached to literature as it became less confined to metaphysical theories, and dry canons of jurisprudence. Public libraries began to be formed on a more extended plan. A diligent search for manuscripts occupied the time and attention of eminent scholars, and Grecian learning revived. In fact, although the sun of science was not yet above the horizon, his refracted beams were becoming visible, promising to appear in radiance above the hovering clouds which yet concealed its glorious orb. We shall see it did appear, and by its genial warmth cherished into existence those pure gems of truth which were bursting their way through the indurated soil of ignorance and superstition, but while we thus gratefully and joyfully anticipate the fruition of the hopes raised by the circumstances we have so cursorily remarked upon, let us not too severely judge the corruptions both civil and ecclesiastical, which history, with due faithfulness records. Amongst those who only confessed with their lips, there were doubtless many who also felt in the heart. Let us recollect that while our judgment is shocked and our minds revolt from a religion of mere ceremony and parade, that they detract not from the loveliness and purity of true religion, and that many a vital spring of real godliness probably wound its peaceful and quiet way, fertilizing many a soul, though hidden from observation by the rocks of error.

The excess of ecclesiastical corruption, and the bold spirit it originated in the observers may be inferred from the remarks of Bernard a French Abbot in a sermon preached before a council. He told the great assembly, that with very few exceptions they were an assembly of Pharisees who made a farce of religion and the church un-

der the mask of processions and other external marks of devotion. "I am sorry to say" he added "that in our days the Catholic faith is reduced to nothing, hope is turned into a rash presumption, and the love of God and our neighbour is extinct. Among the laity falsehood bears the chief sway, and avarice predominates among the clergy. Among the prelates there is nothing but malice and iniquity. At the pope's court there is no sanctity, lawsuits and quarrels being the felicity of that court, and imposture its delight." When men dared to utter such sentiments in open council, the papal power must be thought tottering beneath the weight of its own corruptions. They breathe a spirit of inflexible truth and strong good sense, not the fruit of scholastic theology, but derived from the purer fountain of Christian study and that firm bearing of soul which it induces when truth is the object to be attained.

CHAPTER IX.

Subject resumed—Disappointment of the Irish—Consequences—Sir Anthony Lucy nominated governor—His vigorous proceedings—The king declares his intention of visiting Ireland—His insincerity, neglect of Ireland—Injudicious measures—Ecclesiastics frequently employed in official affairs, reasons why—Edward's displeasure and severity—Jealousy and dissension created—Parliament summoned at Dublin—Did not obey—One convened by the Lords at Kilkenny—Prepare a remonstrance to the king—King's answer gracious—Ralph d'Ufford appointed chief governor—His vigorous measures—His death unfortunate—Irritated lords repair to England, two of them appointed to attend the king to France—Proceedings of the parliament in Ireland—Ralph Kelly, bishop of Cuskel refuses to levy a subsidy—Consequences—Tranquillity at length obtained—Sir Thomas Rokeby's meritorious government—Insurrections renewed—Earl of Desmond made governor, his speedy death—Useful ordinances of parliament and salutary regulations—Strong and obnoxious measures against the Irish—Impatience of the king—Sends his second son Lord Lionel to Ireland—Prejudices counteract every expected advantage—Endeavours to repair his error—Created Duke of Clarence—Recalled to England—Things revert to their former state—Clarence again sent—A parliament assembled at Kilkenny—Statute of Kilkenny—Clarence again leaves Ireland—Earl of Desmond made governor—Dissension and war—Parliament convened—Repugnance of nobles to repair to Ireland—Sir William Winsore appointed governor—Hires the Irish chieftains to oppose the incursions of their countrymen—The king complains of the deficiencies of the Irish revenue—Commands a parliament to be summoned—It refuses supplies—Displeasure of the king—His passionate conduct—Controversy with the parliament—The military genius of Edward inimical to Ireland, to be lamented—English interest declines in Ireland—English clergy, their conduct—Religious opinions an interesting study—The progress of intellectual improvement uniform—Literature encouraged—Circumstances progressively favourable to freedom of discussion and mental emancipation—Infallibility of the pope questioned by many—Wickliffe—Sacerdotal orders quarrel

among themselves—Persecution renders men more zealous—Great schism in the church contributes to weaken it—Digression—Death of Edward the third—Accession of Richard the second—Complaints of the English parliament—Those of Irish subjects as to absentees—Objects of the English government—Parliament convened—De Vere the king's favourite created Marquis of Dublin—He is sent to Ireland with extensive powers—Richard hesitates and withdraws his consent to part from his favourite—Distresses of the Irish—Gloucester proposes to pass over to still the disturbances—He is prevented by the king, who resolves to go himself—He is assisted by his parliament—Lands at Waterford—Pride of the English, and assumption of superiority defeat the good which might have resulted—Narrow minded measures—Irish chiefs do homage—Elation of the king—Chieftains invested with knighthood—Magnificent display of the king—Writes to his uncle York—The reply—Richard is requested to return to England—The Lollards—The king besought to protect the church from this heresy—Richard's proceedings before departure from Ireland—Earl of Marche appointed his vicegerent—War is soon resumed—A pretence for a second royal expedition—Unmindful of the storm brooding in England decreed to overwhelm him, Richard lands at Waterford—Distresses the army encountered—Intelligence from England—Panic of the king—His deposition and death—Confusion of Ireland—A subsidy granted by the English parliament for the service of Ireland—Duke of Lancaster appointed vicegerent—Invasion of the Scots—Arrival of the duke—Art Muc Murchad—Little effected by Lancaster—He returns to England—Butler prior of St. John left deputy—Proceedings in Ireland—Black rent—Penal acts passed against heresy—The king advised to seize the temporalities of the church—Henry the sixth disregards Ireland—Sir John Stanley, governor, short continuance—Crawley, archbishop of Dublin succeeds—War and faction distress the kingdom—Lord Furnival, governor—Decisive measures, but partial—Prejudices of the English against the Irish—causes of them—Narrow policy of the English government on the point—The king memorialized—The chancellor refuses to sanction it with his seal—Indignant feelings roused—Earl of Ormond succeeds Furnival—Petition sent to the king—The prayer of it—Satisfaction of Ormond's government—Litigation of the clergy—Want of amity among the Irish—Accession of Henry the fourth has no effect in Ireland—Earl of March and Ulster appointed to the government—Deputes the bishop of Meath—Altercations in consequence—State of the church and literature—Learning flourishes—Arts and science cultivated and

encouraged—Pontiff's patrons of letters, Nicholas the fifth—Invention of printing—Favouring causes of improvement—The church corrupt—John Huss—Jerome of Prague—Council of Constance—Monastic orders, their degeneracy—Diminution of the papal power—Causes—Fratercelli, their sufferings—Brethren of common life, their rule—Schools of the Lollards—Religion debased—The scriptures studied by many—Reflections.

WE now return to the period from which the foregoing general observations have in some degree led us, as referring to Ireland, after having related the execution of Alice Ketler on a charge of heresy. The prior of Kilmainham appears in that unfeeling affair as an unsuccessful mediator. He subsequently became Lord Chancellor, and finally the government was entrusted to him. His administration was honourably distinguished by an office peculiarly consistent with his sacred function, as well as that justice which should ever mark the conduct of a chief magistrate. He effected by his mediation a reconciliation between several great contending lords, which greatly strengthened the English interest and consequently tended to awe the Irish insurgents, who smarting under the effects of their own turbulence, and dreading the existing state of union among the English, again addressed themselves to the throne of England petitioning for a removal of those legal distinctions which increased so much the anarchy of the land, praying that they might be abolished, and the Irish be admitted to the state and privileges of English subjects, without obliging individuals to sue for special charters. (There are many instances recorded of this having been done during the reign of Henry the third.)

The petition as on former occasions was remitted to the chief governor Darcy, who had succeeded to the prior. He was directed to refer it to the

Irish parliament ; and it was with the same narrow and iniquitous policy, which had operated in former instances, either clandestinely defeated, or openly rejected. Thus did pride and self interest prevail over that generous conciliating system which might have effected the greatest national changes, have composed the turbulence of faction, struck at the root of pernicious prejudices, and diffused with the enjoyment of equal rights and privileges an union of action, and connection of interests, which would have equally promoted the happiness and prosperity of all. Their reasonable petition thus contemned, the naturally violent and impetuous spirit of the Irish again burst forth in an insurrection more simultaneous than had hitherto occurred. The flame of war soon raged in Meath, in Munster, and the fairest of the English settlements. The first successes of the insurgents encouraged them to proceed in their devastating course. We are told that in their triumphant and impetuous progress they surrounded a church, in which there were about eighty persons of English race, assembled at their devotions. These unhappy persons, well aware they had no mercy to expect from a furious and cruel enemy, petitioned only that their priest might be suffered to depart unmolested. This generous and affecting supplication, however, only urged the merciless ravagers to make the priest the first object of their vengeance. He held the host elevated before them, in the hope that the view of that awful object might have some influence upon their minds ; but so far from the sacred image having this desired effect, the sight of it seemed to render them more furious. They tore it from the enfeebled grasp of the terrified priest, and spurning it to the ground, trampled upon it in impious mockery. They then plunged

their weapons into the body of the holy man, who had endeavoured to deprecate their fury, and the church, together with all the miserable people within it, was destroyed by fire. The horror conceived by these desperate acts demanded the most prompt and vigorous measures to arrest them. Deliberations were held, and armaments prepared; but their leaders were divided, and their troops employed with little honour or advantage.

In this state of anarchy and inefficiency, Sir Anthony Lucy, an English knight, was appointed to the government. Astonished and indignant at the insolence of the Irish, he justly suspected they were secretly instigated and abetted by some factious nobles. He entered on his administration with a determined purpose to support the interests of his king, by a vigorous opposition to the Irish insurgents, and a spirited investigation of the insidious practices of his insincere adherents. With this view he summoned a parliament at Dublin, but his order was little regarded, and the assembly was inconsiderable. It was adjourned to Kilkenny, and the numbers were still less. Disaffection, the governor supposed to be the cause of this disregard of his authority; and he determined to strike at the root of the evil, which he believed to be the disloyalty of some English lords. He caused six of them to be seized; the evidence against one of them, named William Bermingham, was conclusive and forcible; he was condemned and executed, and his brother escaped only by his privilege as an ecclesiastic.

But even the activity and power of Sir Anthony Lucy could not have proved equal to the vigorous opposition required, had not Edward at this period discovered an unusual attention to Ireland.

even to declaring his design of visiting that portion of his realm. He summoned some Irish lords to his court, and also all those barons of the realm of England, who enjoyed lands in Ireland. This and many other preparative measures seemed to indicate a settled purpose of complying with the desires of his parliament, and engaging in the effectual reduction of Ireland, where the English power, we have amply seen, had as yet obtained but a precarious and disputed settlement.

Still Ireland was fated to be but the secondary concern of its monarchs. All the preparations of Edward proved but a specious pretence for demanding supplies from his parliament, a veil to conceal those designs, which, though less honourable and justifiable, were better suited to the ambitious spirit of the young monarch. To recover the kingdom of Scotland was his aim, therefore when every thing was prepared for the pretended expedition to Ireland, the king removed the mask, and ordered the forces to march to the frontiers of Scotland. The only course, therefore, now left for the regulation of Ireland, was that of treating with the adversaries of the government. Accordingly, the prior of Kilmainham was commissioned to enter into such conventions with all the insurgents, both Irish and of English race, as he should judge most expedient. "Thus," remarks Leland, "were the turbulent and disaffected taught their own power, and the weakness and inefficiency of the government which attempted to controul them. Insidious accommodations were readily concluded, and a number of secret enemies admitted to the royal grace and favour, whose perverse dispositions were thus cherished, instead of being broken by a steady, firm, and vigorous authority."

We frequently find that ecclesiastics were employed in state affairs, several instances of which we have related, strong as were the reasons against this custom, entrenched as they were in privileges and immunities, exempted from secular jurisdiction, so as to escape with impunity upon any malversation in office, treason itself not being deemed a canonical offence—in fact, unbound by any political law or statute. Yet, on the contrary, there were many strong and peculiar causes, which rendered their employment desirable, and favoured their promotion to the highest political offices. Possessing almost all the learning of the age, and those qualities essential to the due discharge of civil responsibilities; the prelates enjoyed an equal degree of dignity with the barons, and gave weight, by their individual authority, to the powers entrusted to them, while at the same time, they were restrained by the proprieties of their character, from the practice of that *open* rapine and violence, too often practised by the nobles. Nor, from their celibacy, were they so likely to endanger the crown, by accumulating wealth, and with it influence in their families. These reasons induced the English monarchs generally to employ ecclesiastics in official affairs, and thus was their influence every way extended.

But the evils of a distracted, discontented state, were not to be remedied or removed by an injudicious condescension to the enemies of the English interest. Feuds, insurrections, violence, ravage, revolt, could not but produce a deficient revenue, and therefore proved extremely displeasing to the ambitious Edward, meditating his vast designs against France. Obligated to seek every resource to supply his finances, he depended upon Ireland as one channel from which he might draw.

But here he was altogether disappointed. Forgetting that the causes of this disappointment originated in his own neglect of Ireland, he accused his servants and ministers of neglect and corruption, and passionately denounced the terrors of his resentment against the government in that kingdom, and he at once determined on the most arbitrary and offensive measures. After the most oppressive ordinances, the king, with a want of just feeling, and an intemperance unworthy of him, concluded his requisitions, or rather peremptory commands, with one which could not fail further to irritate a people conscious of their own merits, and those of their ancestors. The ordinance we here insert at large from Leland, as a proof of the absorbing nature of ambition, and the facility with which it prostrates to its purposes every sentiment of justice and humanity, and even of generous and wise policy.

“ The king, to his trusty and well-beloved John Darcy, Justiciary of Ireland, greeting: Whereas it appeareth to us and our council, for many reasons, that our service shall be better and more profitably conducted in the said land by English officers, having revenues and possessions in England, than by Irishmen, or Englishmen married and estated in Ireland, and without any possessions in our realm of England, we enjoin you, that you diligently inform yourself of all our officers, greater or lesser, within our land of Ireland aforesaid, and that all such officers beneficed, married, or estated in the said land, and having nothing in England, be removed from their offices; that you place and substitute in their room other fit Englishmen, having lands, tenements, and benefices in England, and that you cause the said offices in future to be executed by such English-

men, and none other, any order of ours to you made in contrariwise notwithstanding."

The liberal and just mind will at once see the iniquitous and impolitic severity of this ordinance, which, by one general sentence of disqualification, pronounces the descendants of those who had originally gained the English possessions in Ireland—who had endured so much to establish and maintain them—who had shed their blood in the service of their king—to be indiscriminately dangerous to the state, and to be declared incapable of filling any of its offices; shutting them out even from the meanest department of that government they were bound to obey, and introducing those who, without local interests or attachments, were too likely to oppress others, and attend only to their own narrow and selfish interests; drawing their incomes from a country, which they gladly left, to enjoy them in their native land; and laying the foundation for all those multiplied evils of *absenteeism*, felt with so much force even at this very day. Thus essentially injured, and even wantonly insulted, the old English inhabitants determined not to yield their rights with an abject resignation. The new comers insolently triumphed. Jealousy and dissension pervaded every part of the government, and soon proved the impolicy of the measures taken.

A common cause was made, and a formidable combination of the different classes was formed, to resist the fulfilment of an ordinance so unjust. So great was the irritation, that the chief governor deemed it necessary to summon a parliament at Dublin, on the critical emergence. This governor was of no higher rank than an English knight, nor was he distinguished either by

fortune or abilities. It was considered not the least of the insults which the great lords he was to govern had to sustain, that the royal authority should be vested in an individual so inferior in rank. They determined not to obey his summons, but when the parliament was to meet at Dublin, the governor received intelligence that another assembly, far more numerous and respectable, had been convened by the lords at Kilkenny, styling themselves the prelates, nobles, and commons of the land. They might be deemed more truly formidable to the royal authority, as they affected to assemble peaceably, in order to prepare a remonstrance to be transmitted to the king. This remonstrance urged plainly and forcibly the just ground of the petitioners' complaints, as to the various instances of corruption, oppression, and extortion, which disgraced the government, and with particular energy represented to the king, that his Irish subjects had been traduced and vilified to the throne, by those sent to govern them—men who came into the kingdom without any knowledge of its state, circumstances, or interests, whose sole intent was to repair their shattered fortunes; who were unable from their poverty to support their state, and minister to their passions, until they had supplied themselves by extortion, at the expense of the people for whom they had no kindred feeling, or national sympathy. Yet, notwithstanding this great oppression and continual evil, the English subjects of Ireland had ever adhered with loyalty and due allegiance to the crown of England, &c.

To the several grievances alleged, the answers of the king were now gracious and condescending, which he found necessary, as he was preparing for his grand expedition to France. He accord-

ingly, having promised to the petitioners that the grants of his progenitors should be restored to them without diminution, and that those made in his own reign should also be ratified, on sufficient surety that they should be again surrendered if found to have been granted without just cause,—sent his letters to the officers of state in Ireland, intimating that he had already applied to the principal lords, and directing them immediately to treat with those lords, in order to prevail upon them to send their respective vassals into Brittany with all possible expedition. It does not appear whether the royal intentions for the redress of grievances were defeated, but it is certain that jealousies and dissensions still continued. Sir Ralph d'Ufford possessing an active and vigorous spirit, was appointed chief governor, and not only executed his delegated power with zeal, but rigour, he ordained that the king's lands should have but *one war and one peace*, that wherever the attack was made, whether a large or small portion, it should be considered as an universal injury, and that all were to unite, as in common cause, to repel one common danger. He took the most vigorous measures against the turbulent and disaffected lords, and compelled them to submit to his authority; and although the principle of fear and terror is the most objectionable engine of a generous government, yet it is probable the system might have proved useful in the then state of Ireland, had not the sudden death of the governor left the result in doubt, his work unfulfilled, and deprived his sovereign of an active and meritorious servant.

His successor, Sir John Morris, acted with greater leniency and condescension. Several of the irritated lords were advised to repair to England, and seek redress from the throne. Their

visit was well-timed. Two of them, Desmond and Kildare, were appointed to attend Edward in his glorious expedition to France. The king was well pleased to engage Desmond in his service; his complaints were listened to with the most gracious attention, redress of all wrongs promised, and he was in the meantime taken into the king's pay, to attend him with a considerable train into France. Kildare, won by the gracious reception of the monarch, also joined the royal standard, and was so distinguished by his valour at the siege of Calais, that he received the honour of knighthood from the king, and returned to his country with that consequence derived from being the object of royal favour, and from the brilliancy of high military service.

Ireland had in the meantime two chief governors, who were employed as usual in the means of defence against the perpetual incursions of the Irish. In order to remedy the abuse of coyne and livery, and to relieve the subject from the heavy pressure of such demands, a parliament resolved to grant a subsidy for maintenance of the Irish war, of two shillings from every carucate of land, and two shillings in the pound from every person whose fortune amounted to six pounds. We mention this grant, as out of it arose an incident which marks the state of the country, and in which the conduct of an ecclesiastic is involved. The see of Cashel was at the time occupied by Ralph Kelly, an Irishman, who though he had sworn allegiance, and received his temporalities from the king, yet was so strongly imbued with the prejudices of his country against the English government, that to impede its operations, and to question and resist its acts, was deemed by him even meritorious. He therefore resolved vigorously to oppose the levying of the

above-named subsidy through his province. By which it would appear, that the grant extended to ecclesiastical persons, and the tenants of ecclesiastical lands. His suffragans of Limerick, Emly, and Lismore were summoned to confer with him, and with their concurrence, he issued an ordinance, that all beneficed clergymen who should presume to pay their allotted share of the subsidy, should immediately be deprived, and declared to be incapable of holding any ecclesiastical benefice within the province; and that all lay tenants who should comply with the requisition were to be excommunicated, and their children disqualified for any ecclesiastical preferment, even to the third generation.

Even this bold and severe edict did not satisfy the indignant feelings and violent zeal of the archbishop. He repaired to Clonmel in all the state of his high sacerdotal office, robed in the habit and with the attendance suited to the most solemn exercise of his holy function, so as to strike the minds of the populace with awe and reverence. He publicly and solemnly denounced the sentence of excommunication on all those who paid, imposed, procured, or in any manner contributed to the exacting of this subsidy from any of the persons or lands belonging to his church, and on William Epworth, by name, the king's commissioner, in the county of Tipperary, for receiving it from the different collectors. An information was exhibited against the prelate for this offence, and resistance of the laws. He denied the charge, pleading, that by the great charter, granted by the crown to England and Ireland, it was provided, that the church, both of England and Ireland, should be free; that by the same charter it was ordained, that those who infringed the immunities of the church should be

ipso facto excommunicated, therefore he had but exercised his just spiritual power against those who violated the king's peace, or levied money on the subject without his knowledge and consent; and that Epworth in particular had been excommunicated, for refusing canonical obedience to his ordinary. Notwithstanding these arguments, the archbishop and his suffragans were found guilty; but though they repeatedly refused to appear in arrest of judgment, their cause was too popular, and their influence too powerful for punishment to be awarded for the offence, in which, however objectionable may be deemed the means he resorted to, he seems to have been actuated by a just sense of right, and a lawful resistance of its violation.

By the favour which had been shown to the Earls of Desmond and Kildare, and by several judicious regulations, the peace of the English territories appears to have been preserved for a longer period than had before occurred.

1353. Sir Thomas Rokeby, an English knight, conducted the government with an equity and integrity which too seldom had distinguished his predecessors, and by his own noble and disinterested moderation, set the laudable example to those lords who had ministered to their luxurious passions by pillage and extortion. "I am served," said this genuine Englishman, "without parade or splendour, but let my dishes be wooden rather than my creditors unpaid." A sentiment which should immortalize his memory, and raise the suffusion of shame on the front of many, his equals in power and rank, but destitute of his noble spirit of independence. Unhappy was it for Ireland, that his integrity and disinterested zeal, eminent as they were, could not give weight and due consequence to his authority in a coun-

try, to the local situation of which he was a stranger, and where the interests and passions of those he was to govern were in continual, violent, and pernicious collision.

Insurrections of the Irish were renewed, and the king determined to appoint the Earl of Desmond (now in perfect reconciliation to the crown) to the government of the disordered kingdom, rightly judging, that his warlike qualities, extensive connexions and dependencies, rendered him peculiarly calculated for the dignity. What effects might have resulted from his administration were not, however, proved, as the earl died soon after his appointment. Rokeby resumed the reins, and some useful ordinances of parliament distinguish the period. Amongst them may be ranked the privilege of Irish subjects to refer to their own parliaments to obtain redress, in any erroneous proceedings of their courts, which they had hitherto been obliged to seek in England at a great expense and trouble. Some salutary regulations respecting the instruction of the people, also mark the increasing expansion of mind distinguishing the period. An ordinance, to prevent the evil and inconvenience arising from the non-residence of pastors, was followed by one for the due regulation both of church and state, and the more effectual execution of the English laws.

They begin with a declaration, that the liberties and immunities of the church shall be preserved inviolate, and then proceed to point out the regular and legal method for adjusting the general interests and concerns of the state. Among several provisions for the execution of justice, and the protection of the subject, according to the great charter, one which evidences the temper of the English subjects in Ireland deserves mention. “ *Item.* Although the English born in Ire-

land, as well as those born in England, be true Englishmen, living under our dominion and sovereignty, and bound by the same rights, customs, and laws, yet various dissensions have arisen among those of both races, on account of national distinction, from whence some evils have arisen, and greater are to be apprehended, unless a remedy be speedily applied. Our pleasure is, and we strictly enjoin that our Lord Justice, calling unto him our chancellor and treasurer of Ireland, and such nobles as he shall think proper from the districts in which such dissensions have arisen, shall frequently as need may be, diligently inquire into such dissensions, maintainances, and factions, and the names of those by whom they are supported, and causing due process to be made against the delinquents, shall, when convicted, punish them by fine, imprisonment, or any just method, as such dissensions manifestly tend to lead our liege people into sedition and treason." Thus while legal inflictions were ordained for overt acts, of which, indeed, they could only take cognizance, the origin of the streams of error and of guilt from which they inevitably flowed, were disregarded or not appreciated.

The governors of Ireland appear to have forgotten that it constitutes the very essence of crime, to be unmindful of its consequences. Few culprits who violate and suffer the vengeance of the law, are the dupes of their own ignorance, they are rather the slaves of passion, the victims of inveterate habit, or of a supposed or real necessity. In a divided and discontented population, circumstances must be of continual recurrence, which would rouse the passions, outrage the habits, and *make the necessity* of dissension, and faction, and competition, as a remedy was

applied to one evil, another presented itself eluding every endeavour of even a vigilant government to ensure any permanency of tranquillity.

Thus to guard against the treacherous subtilty of the Irish, and to discover that pernicious correspondence which the increasing degeneracy of the English had encouraged, it was enjoined by royal mandate, that no mere Irishman should be admitted into any office or trust, in any city, borough, or castle, in the king's land; that no bishop or prior, under the king's dominion and allegiance, should admit any of this race to an ecclesiastical benefice, or into any religious house, on account of consanguinity, or other pretence whatever. This severe deprivation of compatriot privileges, malice, and self-interest, were ready to extend far beyond its original intention. The denized Irish were excluded from ecclesiastical preferments, by virtue of the clause which directed that these should be bestowed upon English clerks. Thus one evil produced many. The clergy, however, with becoming spirit, applied to parliament for relief, and succeeded in obtaining an explanation in favour of their rights.

It certainly would appear, by the strong and obnoxious measures against the Irish, that they were regarded in a very degraded light—even a race irreclaimable. The resistance of the oppressed, and the irritations of national pride, were imputed as natural defects to cruelty and barbarism. No measures seem to have been taken to conciliate the affections, but all seemed ready in 'endeavours to subdue the persons, and invade the possessions of the Irish. The English appear not to us as the protectors and benefactors of the people whose land they invaded, but anxious to prove themselves their lords. We, perhaps, should expect too much in the then

state of society, to observe those who considered themselves conquerors of a barbarous people, following up that conquest, by a generous zeal for general happiness, and by liberal sentiments and extensive views of national welfare, gradually converting "the rudeness, the disorders, and distresses of anarchy, into the peace, dignity, and the multifarious advantages and comforts of social and civil life."

Our third Edward, whose course had been that of success and glory, impatiently regarded the complicated and continued disorders of Ireland, and once more directed his attention to that portion of his dominions. Lord Lionel, his second son, had in his very childhood been affianced to Elizabeth, daughter to the deceased Earl of Ulster, and inherited that earldom in right of his wife, as well as the lordship of Connaught, and extensive annexed domains. The interest of his son, and the welfare of his Irish dominions, combined to determine Edward to consign the government to him, with the highest powers to give weight and authority to it. After various formalities and exertions, indicating great designs, about fifteen hundred men were collected, headed by Lord Lionel, and attended by several knights and leaders of distinction.

Much might have been effected with this considerable force, if duly supported by the great lords of Ireland. But unfortunately for that ill-fated land, the royal governor passed to his high station fraught with all those unhappy prejudices and false ideas, which had prevailed respecting the character of those he was appointed to govern. Hence, with a folly which only his youth could excuse, he regarded the whole race, without discrimination, as utterly beneath his regard, unwor-

thy his confidence, and disaffected to his father's interests. Surrounding himself by the faction of English birth, he with equal injustice and credulity listened to their envious suggestions, adopted their unjust prejudices, and by a proclamation breathing pride, passion and prejudice, peremptorily forbade all the old English or any of the king's subjects of Irish birth to approach his camp. This surely was not the mode to conciliate the affection, to win the confidence, to allay the passions, to remove the prejudices, to silence the tumults, or heal the dissensions of a high spirited people, writhing under oppression and indignant of the yoke.

By this injudicious and insulting conduct the prince naturally offended the most powerful party in the realm, who while they resented this ungenerous return to the services of their ancestors could not forbear at the same time to regard with sovereign contempt that infatuated policy by which their new governor deprived himself of the only efficient assistance to give a prospect of success in his operations. The result proved what might be expected, the prince soon found himself surrounded with difficulties. Imminent dangers roused him from his error, and his circumstances were too urgent to allow him a moment of delay in the correction of it. The old English were invited by proclamation to attend his standard, a second proclamation from the king gave force to that of the prince, and ordered all those nobles of the English nation who had not obeyed former commands to repair to Ireland without delay on pain of forfeiture of all their lands and possessions. The invitation to the subjects of Ireland of the old English race was obeyed speedily. They resorted in great numbers to the prince's standard

(the title of duke of Clarence having been conferred upon him) and by their assistance a revolution of affairs in his favour was effected.

On his return from his expeditions he conferred the honour of knighthood on several of his followers, and such favourable sentiments of his administration were entertained, and such sanguine expectations of his ultimate success in his warlike operations against the Irish, that the king's subjects, both clergy and laity, granted him two years value of their revenues to maintain the war. This liberality appears to have been more cheerfully conceded as his forces had been retained within the strictest rules of discipline, and no arbitrary exactions had been made. It seems however, that as soon as Ireland began for a moment to breathe freely, and partially to recover from the debility consequent on over wrought exertion, she was ever left to her own enfeebled energies, and the disorders of the political body returned with renewed force. The duke at the period when he began to acquire some influence was recalled to England, and every thing reverted to its former wretched state; mandates were issued, punishments were threatened, but were of little consequence to repress the dissensions of the English, much less to unite them. English by birth and English by race became terms of odious distinction, keeping alive prejudices, and daily adding to the bitterness of animosity. Several changes of government took place, till in 1367 the duke of Clarence was once more sent to stem the torrent of disorder. He was now well acquainted with the circumstances of the country, and well knew that the first object of his care must be the reformation of the English settlers, nor was he deficient in zeal and diligence in this important work. A parliament was summoned at Kilkenny,

and presented a more numerous and august assembly than had hitherto been convened in Ireland. The prelates of Dublin, Cashel, Tuam, Lismore, Waterford, Killaloe, Ossory, Leighlin, Cloyne obeyed the summons of the prince. Temporal peers and commons also attended with alacrity, both estates sat together, and the result of their deliberations was the ordinance known in Ireland by the designation of the statute of Kilkenny.

This statute, which provided for the reformation and security of the king's subjects in Ireland, was promulged with particular solemnity, and the spiritual lords, in conformity to the usages of the times, the better to enforce obedience to its enactments, denounced an excommunication on those who should presume to violate it in any instance. The solemnity with which these laws were made and promulged, the severe penalties attached to their infringement, the presence of a royal governor so pleasing to the pride of the governed, his attention to preserve discipline and to rectify evils coming within the range of his authority, had no inconsiderable effect in producing the desired results. But the wisest institutions could have no permanent good effect under a versatile and uncertain government. Accordingly, on the departure of the Duke of Clarence, when the young Earl of Desmond was entrusted with the administration, the state became once more embroiled by domestic dissensions, and war again raged through the country. A parliament was convened and voted a subsidy of three thousand pounds, and another of two thousand in a following session to support the expenses of hostilities against the Irish. Such conceptions had been formed of the miserable and dangerous state of Ireland from these disorders of the people, that even those who had received Irish grants could

neither be persuaded to repair thither, nor to send any person to the custody of their lands, notwithstanding the reiterated edicts of the king. And so great was the repugnance of going to Ireland, that when Sir R. Pembridge was appointed to the government, he is said to have shuddered at the very idea of residing in a country overspread with barbarous and malignant savages. He refused to execute his commission and it was adjudged that this refusal was strictly legal, for that a residence in Ireland was but an honourable exile, and that no man could by law be forced to abandon his country, except in case of abjuration for felony or by act of parliament. Sir William Windsore was appointed, he adopted the plan of hiring the Irish chieftains to oppose the incursions of their countrymen into the English settlements. But this narrow and shortsighted policy aggravated rather than relieved the evil. If the stipulated payment was at any time delayed, they rose to arms with double fury and forced a prompt payment from the king's exchequer. Yet the system was continued in the government of the Duke of Ormond and a precarious peace purchased, which was perpetually violated by their fickleness and precipitance. The king was not pleased to find that any part of the supplies destined for his grand military designs should be appropriated to purposes he deemed so inferior. He impatiently dispatched an agent to Ireland, with instructions to represent the necessities of the crown, and to complain of the deficiencies of the Irish revenue. He was directed to command that a parliament should be convened without delay for the purpose of granting such a liberal subsidy as should not only provide for the exigencies of Ireland, but also for the king's assistance in his foreign wars. The parliament was

convened, pleaded the extreme poverty of the realm and refused supplies. The indignant Edward issued his writs of summons to clergy and laity. The bishops were commanded to chuse two of the clergy in each diocese, the commons two laymen of each county to represent the lords and commons of that county. In like manner the cities and boroughs were to elect two citizens and burgesses. The assembly was directed to repair to the king, to treat, consult and agree with him and his council, as well on the government of the land of Ireland, as the aid and support of the king's war.

The answers of the archbishop of Armagh, and of the county of Dublin to this summons are worthy of record, "We are not bound," observes the prelate, "agreeably to the liberties, privileges, rights, laws and customs of the church and land of Ireland, to elect any of our clergy, and to send them to any part of England, for the purpose of holding parliament or council in England. Yet on account of our reverence to our lord the king of England, and the now imminent necessity of the land aforesaid, saving to us and to the lords and commons of the said land, all rights, privileges, liberties, laws and customs aforesaid, we have elected representatives to repair to the king in England to treat and consult with him and his council, except however, that we by no means grant to our said representatives any power of assenting to any burdens or subsidies to be imposed on us or our clergy, to which we cannot yield by reason of our poverty and daily expense in defending the land against the Irish enemy." This guarded permission did not well suit the exigences and wishes of Edward, but it does not appear that he noticed it. The city of Dublin however at first elected their representatives with-

out power or authority to consent to any impositions. In this instance the king complained that the election was insufficient and irregular, and the sheriff was directed to make another return. It was attempted to be evaded. At length the nobles and commons "unanimously declare that according to the rights, privileges, liberties, laws and customs of the land of Ireland, they were not bound to accede to the requisitions of the writ. Notwithstanding, on account of their reverence, &c. they have elected representatives to treat and consult with the king and his council, reserving to themselves the power of yielding or agreeing to any subsidies. At the same time protesting that the present compliance was not to be taken as precedent, or to prejudice the rights enjoyed since the conquest of Ireland." The result of this controversy does not clearly appear; the Irish representatives assembled at Westminster, and their wages were levied on the dioceses, counties and boroughs which had chosen them. It may be regarded as a misfortune to Ireland that the high capacity of our third Edward was occupied in schemes of foreign conquest rather than in the wise and salutary administration of his own Irish territory. He possessed abilities to have applied the proper remedies to the many and complicated disorders which distracted it, and penetration sufficient to trace them to their source. But he falsely thought the work beneath the dignity of his genius, and borne away by the military passion of the times, attended little to those measures which might have contributed to the comfort and refinement of a people assuredly possessed of qualities which would have well repaid the trouble of cultivation.

Towards the close of Edward's brilliant career, the English interest appears to have declined in

Ireland, and the government still to be disordered. The perpetual succession of new adventurers from England, some led by necessity, others by interest, served only to keep alive jealousy and dissension instead of introducing any useful improvement. Lawyers sent from England we are informed were notoriously insufficient, if not corrupt. The meanness of the English clergy was only redeemed by their implicit attachment to the crown. Even prelates were made the inferior agents of government in collecting forces, and raising war against the Irish enemy; yet were not to be enticed into a service so disgraceful to their character, unless by remittances from the exchequer. They dreaded attendance in parliament as the greatest hardship, so destitute were they of all patriotic feeling, and either recurred to mean excuses to avert the penalty of absence, or sued the king to be exempted by patent from contributing or assenting to those laws by which they were to be governed.

Amongst the most interesting studies of the progress of European society we must certainly reckon the religious opinions as operating upon the moral character of man, and gradually elevating him from the debasements of superstition and causing a revolution in manners as well as of thinking. When men begin to feel the influence of those great truths in which their eternal well-being is involved, when they impress minds keen and acute in their perceptions, they give a power and energy to those minds of no common character, and the fervour which is thus enkindled communicates its vivifying influence far and wide. For in the lowest grades of the human race there are feelings mingled with man's nature, which when called into action give the first spring to moral improvement, and which a master spirit directing his attention may render subservient

to the greatest good. We are arrived at a period when such an impulse was given to the popular feeling.

The progress of intellectual improvement had for a considerable period been uniform though silent, libraries became more numerous, and many plans were formed for promoting the study of letters, improving taste, and dispelling the pedantic spirit which had pervaded literature. Colleges were formed on liberal plans, and men of learning were animated to aspire to fame and glory by a prospect of honourable reward. And though the historian is obliged to confess that too general ecclesiastical corruption prevailed, yet justice and truth equally allow him to observe that in the midst of much prevailing depravity, there were many pious and worthy men who ardently desired a reformation of the church both in its head and members. Laudable as were these desires, circumstances were however not yet sufficiently mature to produce their accomplishment. The exorbitant power of the popes had been too long confirmed to yield without some mighty effort, the enslaving superstition of the multitude could not be dispelled by a feeble breath of opposition, the wretched ignorance that prevailed, by which as it were every spark of truth was extinguished ere it could well be lighted, could not be removed and the beam of truth made clear to the mental view without a master hand to act under an influence not of earth. Yet all these obstacles were gradually and imperceptibly giving way, and the evils mighty as they were, forming their own remedy. Great schisms arose in the Romish church, which brought in their train serious inquiry. This was a severe test; and happy had it been for the Romish religion, that men in general seldom go beyond a certain link in the chain of thought,

or look deeply into the sources of traditionary doctrines. Although the state of morals and religion were at low ebb, yet many of the least degraded amongst the people, had the courage to despise and disregard the popes, and to call in question their infallibility. An entrance thus opened to the ray of truth, we shall see that its light gradually diffused itself, and as the sun in his might disperses the lowering vapours of the night, so the benign ray of Christian truth gradually dispelled the mists of papal superstition. It was towards the close of Edward's reign that the aversion rising against the established religion, openly manifested itself and was boldly justified and supported. Wickliffe, the reader of English history well knows, at that period spread the doctrine of reformation by his discourses, sermons, and writings, and made many converts among those of all ranks and stations. The propagation of his principles gave great alarm to the clergy. Wickliffe had been animated to his display of zeal, by the writings and example of Richard of Armagh, to whom we have before alluded, and following his steps he first in 1360 defended the privileges and statutes of the university at Oxford against the orders of the mendicants, and even had the courage to throw out some reproofs against the popes, their principal patrons. Subsequently he was deprived of the wardenship of Canterbury hall in the university, by Simon Langham, archbishop of Canterbury, who instituted a monk in his place. Upon which Wickliffe appealed to Urban the fifth, who as might be expected confirmed the sentence against him, on the ground of the unwarrantable freedom with which he had inveighed against the monastic orders. Exasperated at the injustice, Wickliffe threw off restraint, and not only attacked all the monks and their

irregularities, but even the pontifical power itself, and other ecclesiastical abuses. He proceeded to still further lengths, boldly refuting both in his sermons and writings with equal acuteness and spirit the absurd notions that were generally received in religious matters. He exhorted the laity to study the scriptures, and in order to render his exhortations more universally practicable he translated the sacred volume. The monks whom he had irritated, of course commenced a violent persecution against the reformer, for the result of which we refer our readers to English history, contenting ourselves by observing here, that although the doctrine of Wickliffe was far from being free from error, yet it is certain that the changes he attempted to introduce both in the faith, and discipline of the church, were in many respects wise, useful and salutary, and that the promulgation of it produced an extensive reformation. Wickliffe thus began to break up the rugged soil, to the cultivation of which he had been directed and animated by the example of Richard Fitzraf, the Irish archbishop. It is interesting and pleasing to trace the causes which give a bias to the intellectual powers of man, and to mark the concatenation of events and circumstances, with the endless influence of mind upon mind. The attacks and endeavours of the reformer and his disciples did not however perceptibly abate the pride, or materially affect the influence of the mendicants. They of course rather quickened their zeal and renewed their diligence in propagating their opinions, become so highly detrimental to the purity of Christianity, and increasing in absurdity even to an impious extent.

But there were internal causes which were operating in sapping the foundations of their power and influence, quarrels amongst them-

selves, and with their head, disgraced the professors of a religion of concord, and accelerated the prostration of their ambitious and overgrown authority. Neither edicts nor inquisitors could reconcile the continual discords which occurred, and disturbed with endless contentions the period of which we now speak. Some new monastic societies were yet formed in the fourteenth century, some were of short duration, and none arose to celebrity. The corruption of religion was indeed so great in this age, its forms so adulterated and deformed, that not a single branch of genuine Christian doctrine retained a trace of its primitive lustre and beauty. Hence it may easily be imagined that those who eagerly desired a reformation, and had separated themselves from the jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome, though everywhere exposed to violent persecutions, yet increased and flourished day by day in the fiery soil, baffling all attempts made to extirpate them. As an instance that Rome still increased in absurdity and in art to favour its cupidity, we name two new ceremonies instituted at this period, one a festival sacred to the honour of the *lance* with which the Saviour's side was pierced, the nails which fastened his sacred form to the cross, and the crown of thorns which in mocking he wore. What serious Christian but must turn with disgust and indignation from this impious mockery of a scene and circumstances which to contemplate, should fill the soul with deep, grateful and affecting awe. What occasion was there for visible emblems, of that mysterious sacrifice, when the inspired volume places a graphic description before us sufficiently impressive to rouse the feelings of any one not totally hardened? But to open the sacred volume to the inquiring mind, would not have ministered to the cupidity of the

spiritual guides, and it was more safe for the pontifical power to command Christians to add to their prayers the salutation of the angel Gabriel to the holy Mary, than to teach them to search the scriptures, and to trace from beginning to end man's primeval dignity, unhappy fall, and means for final restoration.

There can be little doubt that the papacy was considerably weakened by the schism which took place in this century respecting the election of Urban the sixth, and Clement the seventh,* of which we have made mention in our illustrative note, a dispute which distracted Europe during a long period, the different kingdoms being divided, as was Galway, according to their several interests between the two pontiffs. Each party condemned the other as schismatics, and as rebels to the true vicar of Christ. Thus the appellation of Clementines and Urbanists were respective terms of reproach, and each regarded the other with all the bitterness of party spirit. Two or three of the pontiffs who flourished in this century, offer such strong moral contrasts that we may be permitted to digress a little by sketching some circumstances relating to them. The most pleasing and remarkable was Clement the sixth, who not only was one of the most profound scholars of the age, but a wise and beneficent prince, for the ten years of his pontificate were marked by many brilliant and glorious actions. The most generous of men, nothing was so painful to him as to be obliged to a refusal. Not content with bestowing the treasures of the church in great profusion, he expended considerable sums in the foundation of useful establishments, in giving marriage portions to orphans, and in relieving

* This schism continued from 1378—1417.

noble families who had fallen into indigence. Petrarch observes "none ever better merited the name of Clement, which was well deserved by his actions." An instance most honourable to his heart is related. A person who had very deeply offended him ventured to ask a favour from him. He was tempted to seize this fair opportunity of revenging himself, but he resisted the impulse and granted the favour. Endued with a commanding and natural eloquence, he spoke with energy and without premeditation, with equal dignity and fluency. Possessed of the essential requisites for a true orator, he transfused with singular facility his own sentiments into the minds of others, directing the impulses of the heart as he chose, but ever breathing peace and union; wherever he saw the sparks of war, he hastened with the true spirit of a minister of peace to smother them ere they could rise into a flame. Avignon, which was the seat of the papal court during his pontificate, 1342, presented at that time a mixture of splendour and poverty, very striking and indicative of the manners and character of the age. The houses of the native inhabitants were low and ill built, and in many instances in a state of dilapidation caused by the war against the Albigenses, when the place was devastated by orders of the papal legate sent on a crusade against the Count of Toulouse, in 1226. It is at all times a delightful exercise of the rational and pious mind to trace in the circumstances of life, the moral compensations of an overruling providence. . .

The long continued residence of the papal court at Avignon, was, as it were, an involuntary reparation for the cruel and unjust vengeance it had exercised within its walls, and that residence was one of the most efficient causes of the abase-

ment of a power then so cruelly abused. Whatever might have been the poverty of the original inhabitants, the pope and the cardinals vied with each other in erecting stately towers and palaces, not only within the city, but beyond its precincts, on the delightful banks of the Rhone.

During the pontificate of Clement VI. the papal court at Avignon assumed a splendour and magnificence till then unknown. Clement, born of an illustrious race, was affable, noble, and generous, having from his birth acquired the habits and manners of a man of rank, who had lived only in the courts of princes, amidst regal magnificence and state. No sovereign exceeded him in expenditure, nor bestowed his favours with more generous grace. The sumptuousness of his furniture, the delicacy of his table, the splendour of his court, filled with knights and esquires of the ancient nobility, was unequalled. Delighting in the chase and in horses, his stud consisted of the finest that could be procured. Accustomed to the society of ladies, he continued to associate with them when pope. But here our praise must cease on this point. Morality must condemn his attachment to the Viscountess de Turenne, who, as is usual when the affections are thus engaged by an illicit object, was the channel of favour, and possessed a pernicious influence over his mind. This circumstance, however, proved no obstacle to other ladies resorting to the papal court of Avignon; the rival beauties of every country formed the circle there, some to follow the fortunes of their husbands, some to partake of the pleasures and fetes which a brilliant court afforded, and others to procure alliances for their daughters. Avignon was, also, at this period, the residence of ambassadors from every state in Europe, and was frequently visited by

their respective sovereigns, many of whom had even fixed residences there. It was also the resort of people of talent and learning, whom the urbanity and munificence of Clement attracted to his court. He had, immediately on his accession, promulgated a bull, inviting all the scholars of Europe to his court. It is said that more than a hundred thousand obeyed the welcome call, and that of the number not one of them departed without some favour.

But it was not only in regal state and splendour, nor as a patron of learning, that Clement VI. was eminent. His charities were equally upon a broad and princely scale.

At the period of the dreadful plague that desolated Europe during the pontificate of Clement, and from which Avignon suffered so terribly, he adopted the wisest and most humane measures, in order not only to relieve the sufferers, but to prevent the spreading of the infection. Many during the plague left their estates to the mendicant friars, who attended the sick while others deserted them. The parish priests and other clergy, envying the riches thus honourably acquired, applied to Clement to suppress the order, or at least to prevent the members from preaching, hearing confession, or burying the dead. The petition for this purpose was presented in full consistory, supported by cardinals and bishops. The answer of Clement illustrates in a lively manner the character of the speaker, and the manners of the generality of the clergy at this period; hence we deem it not inconsistent with this portion of our work to introduce it.

“The mendicants,” he observed with his usual easy dignity, “have exposed their lives by attending dying persons, and administering the sacraments to them, whilst you, consulting your own

safety, fled from the danger and abandoned your flocks. You have therefore no reason to complain of what they have got by performing the duty which you have neglected, though incumbent upon you. They employ the little they have gained in new building, repairing, and embellishing their churches, but you perhaps would have applied it to very different uses. You advise me to silence them, and leave the preaching of the word entirely to you. And what would you preach? surely not humility, as you are known to be the most haughty and proud set of men on earth, and the most pompous, in your attendants and equipages. Would you recommend poverty and contempt of worldly wealth, you whom no benefices can satisfy however accumulated! Would you urge fasting, abstinence and a mortified life, while you fare sumptuously, and indulge yourselves in the most delicate meats? As for your charity, I leave it to yourselves to consider whether you could with a good grace recommend that virtue to others. The mendicants preach nothing but what by their example they prove practicable, whereas many among you preach one thing and practise the contrary."—*See Bower's History of the Popes.*

The popular faction which placed Urban in the papal chair, and caused the great schism in the western church had soon reason to repent their credulity. He was a lively instance of the corrupting nature of power, and the influence of circumstances in drawing forth the latent depravity of the heart. This pontiff was of a noble Neapolitan family, and at the period of his elevation was about sixty years of age, of gigantic stature, strong and robust of frame, saturnine complexion, and his eyes bright, with fiery expression. Such was the exterior of this vicar of the God of peace and love. His conduct previous to his elevation

had not accorded with the impression that displeasing exterior was calculated to make on the beholder, for he had appeared humble, modest, devout, and prudent; of austere manners, punctual in the ceremonies of his vocation, rarely appearing in public, and then riding upon a mule attended only by one servant on horseback, although holding the high dignity of archbishop of Bari. He was eminent in all the scholastic learning of the time, and had shown himself a patron of men of worth and genius, but from the moment of his elevation, his nature seemed changed. Arrogant, imprudent, inexorable and vindictive, his excesses were too open, his actions too furious, even to allow those who espoused his cause in the schism with all the violence of religious zeal, to deny or palliate them. Immediately on his accession he wrote to all the princes of Europe that his election had been caused by an immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which had prompted the cardinals to choose a pope not even a member of the sacred college. Such was the intemperate folly of his conduct, his insulting manners, his inordinate ambition, that the sacred college elected the count and cardinal of Geneva, who took the name of Clement the seventh, who was enthroned at Fondi 1379. This pontiff was chosen by the French cardinals because allied to many of the crowned heads in Europe, and highly distinguished for his various accomplishments, but unfortunately his abilities were by no means adapted to the exigencies of the perilous situation he was called to fill. He was eminent as a profound and elegant scholar, endued with a commanding eloquence, speaking fluently the French, Italian, German and Latin languages, but deficient in that political sagacity so essentially indispensable in his critical situation.

Princely in his habits and disposition, generous, magnificent and prodigal, he greatly resembled Clement the sixth. He was in the prime of manhood when he was elected pope, being in his thirty-sixth year, and in person as unlike his rival as his character was dissimilar. His height scarcely rose to the middle stature, yet his air was majestic.

The rival popes soon divided Europe between them. The emperor, the kings of England, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Bohemia, and most of the states of Italy and Flanders espoused the cause of the ferocious Urban. Whilst France, Spain, Naples, Scotland, Cyprus, Savoy, the dukedom of Austria, some of the Italian and German states adhered to Clement. Each published crusades and fulminated anathemas against the other, and under pretence of punishing schismatics and heretics, all Europe was disturbed by the cruelties, the quarrels, and the oppressions of their adherents, and the plains of Romagna soon witnessed what never before had been beheld in the various schisms which had split the church, rival armies bearing the banner and the keys of St. Peter. The final result would have been favourable to Clement had he not with a culpable timidity abandoned his own cause. Destitute of decision of character and political sagacity, he resolved to retire to Avignon and leave Italy to his rival. In the meantime the licentious populace of Rome were become weary of the fierce idol they had raised, and considered that it would be better to have a pope at Avignon than to endure the tyranny of the furious Urban, whose death they determined to accomplish either by secret poison or open violence. The first not succeeding, they surrounded the pontifical palace to effect the latter, but were prevented accomplishing their

purpose by that undaunted resolution which forms one of the requisites of greatness, and which distinguished Urban, combined with that inflexible constancy of purpose which forces its way to its object unchecked by the feeble opposition of an ever vacillating multitude. When these qualities are found combined in an individual, it must be subject of regret to a reflecting mind, that they are not directed to virtuous aims, and exercised to effect good, not to extend evil. The firmness of Urban at this critical moment saved his life. He arrayed himself in his pontifical robes, the triple crown and the other insignia of the rank to which the transient favour of the fickle multitude had raised him, by the same tumultuous impulse they now sought to hurl him from his elevation. Seating himself on his throne, Urban commanded the doors of the palace to be thrown open. The multitude rushed in with unsheathed swords, but such was the sudden effect of his towering figure, eagle eye, and awe inspiring voice, that every step was arrested when he asked in the words of his divine master, "Whom seek ye?" The unmoved calmness he displayed, seemed to the awe struck superstitious mob the effect of immediate divine inspiration, and not presuming to violate what they considered the majesty of heaven visibly presented to them in his commanding person, they simultaneously retired in silence, impressed with shame and horror at the crime they had meditated. We shall not digress further to trace the enormities and cruelties of this furious pontiff, only adding that becoming daily more odious to those around him his death was hastened by poison administered to him by his domestic servants. As soon as his life was pronounced in danger he was deserted by all his family, who feared the vengeance of the Romans

would be wreaked on them the moment he breathed his last. *See Life of Joanna Queen of Naples.*

Such was the general state of affairs about the period when Edward the third was succeeded by his grandson Richard the second, at the early age of eleven years. The change from a sovereign such as Edward to that of a child was not immediately felt, and seems not to have affected Ireland, where affairs still continued disordered, and continual insurrections devastated and impoverished the nation. The English parliament complained much of the expense attending the maintenance of the king's Irish dominions, and the subjects of Ireland repeated their complaints that the nobility and gentry of England abandoned their Irish lands, and left the residents unequal to the charge and labour necessary for the public welfare. Thus early were the evils of *absenteeism* felt. The grievance was represented to the king, and by law it was ordained that such absentees should repair to their lands, or send sufficient deputies to provide for their defence, in default of doing this they were to be taxed to the amount of two thirds of their Irish revenues, to be applied to the service of the kingdom, excepting those only immediately engaged in the king's service, students of the universities, and those absent by licence, who were to be taxed only one third of their revenues. The present object of the English government was evidently to make Ireland contribute to the exigencies of state, and a grand parliament was directed to be convened to consult on the best modes of effecting the desired purpose. Things were in this train under several successive governors, when the situation of Richard and the restraints against which his violent spirit revolted, produced a change in the government of Ireland. "Extreme pride and violence,"

says an interesting historian, "with an inordinate partiality for the most worthless favourites were the predominant characteristics of Richard, who was moreover by no means deficient in capacity, as has been imagined." Certainly the decisive promptitude in seizing the critical moment for action, which he displayed in several instances during the period of his power, indicates a considerable portion of mental energy, although it was frequently weakened by vicious counsel, and by his own inexperienced folly and obstinacy. It is known that with an infatuation very common to inexperience and a consciousness of power, Richard resigned himself implicitly to his favourite Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, whose gay and captivating deportment recommended him to the young monarch, and whose corrupt morals sullied those of his royal patron. With a prodigality of favour Richard hardly knew how sufficiently to prove it to his beloved companion. He loaded him with honours, one of which has immediate reference to the land of Hibernia, De Vere was created marquis of Dublin, and in order to raise him to as high a degree of sovereignty as in his power, Richard by the same patent granted to him and his heirs the entire dominion of Ireland to be held of the crown by liege homage. Those lands and cities formerly reserved to the crown were only excepted, and the earl was bound, as soon as he should complete the conquest of the kingdom to pay into the English exchequer annually during his life the sum of five thousand marks. In every other particular the entire government and dominion of the kingdom was vested in him. The parliament, not displeased at the removal of the favourite, readily consented to the important grant, and every fair promise of a permanent government appeared for Ireland.

Splendid preparations were made to give dignity to the new viceroy, and the king even accompanied him to Wales. The moment of separation arrived, the policy of the monarch gave place to the feelings of the youth, which though indiscreet were at least of amiable source, and Richard declared he could not part from his friend. The marquis returned with his royal master, and ill-fated Ireland was committed to his deputies. But his parade of sovereignty was short lived. He was with his friends shortly after denounced as enemies to the state, and when the marquis was driven into the low countries by the triumphant faction, every thing in Ireland reverted to the king and was conducted by his authority. Affairs there assumed nearly the same aspect that they had previously borne, and the monarch was frequently roused from his voluptuous ease by affecting representations of the distresses of his Irish subjects. Gloucester the king's uncle, a nobleman turbulent, popular and ambitious, made a tender of his services to pass over to Ireland. His offer was accepted and forces prepared. The enemies of the English government in Ireland were alarmed at the anticipated government of a prince of royal blood, of high abilities, active, enterprising, rigid and inflexible, and the expectations of all men were prepared for a strong and vigorous administration. The hopes of the well affected were naturally elevated by the same considerations, when at the very moment of embarkation the duke received a letter from his royal nephew arresting his departure as he was himself resolved to make an expedition into Ireland, and to take that part of his dominions into his own immediate care. Whatever were the motives which urged a change apparently so capricious, the design once conceived it

was necessary to gain supplies. A parliament readily granted money for this royal service, the clergy gave a tenth of their revenues if Richard should repair to Ireland in person, otherwise but half that sum. Levies and preparations were carried on with spirit, but in the midst of them the death of his beloved queen, who had justly acquired the title of the "good Queen Anne," plunged Richard into the deepest anguish, and, of course, suspended for a while his Irish designs, but they were resumed as the best antidote against the melancholy, which the scene of his departed joys continually cherished and increased. It was in October 1394 that Richard landed at Waterford with a royal army, attended by his uncle Gloucester, and other distinguished personages. It appeared a critical period for Ireland. An army of four thousand men at arms, and thirty thousand archers, commanded by some of the prime nobility of England, with a young monarch at their head, seemed to ensure a termination to the disorders, the rebellions, and the distresses of the Irish. Numberless advantages presented themselves, if duly improved, to have united in a liberal and equitable spirit of policy, the authority of the English government, and the general civility and pacification of the kingdom. But, unfortunately, the pride of the English, regarding in a degraded estimation the people whom they would subdue, forbade them to propose the generous scheme of receiving all the inhabitants into the great body of British subjects, and conferring equally upon all the benefits of a free and equitable constitution.

"Men had not at that time," observes Leland, "acquired that extended and comprehensive benevolence, which is the effect of refinement and deep moral reflection," and however they

might estimate the blessing of liberty they wished to confine it to themselves. With these narrow views, to receive homage and tribute, to accept insincere and forced submissions, to require the peace to be kept inviolate, were sufficient to gratify the pride and vanity of a prince, from whom, perhaps, we should judge inconsistently of the influences of the age, were we to expect exalted sentiments, or penetrating political views. The Irish chieftains, with an abject submission, forming a strange and forcible contrast to their generally assuming pride, did homage and fealty in all the forms of amplest humility. On bended knees, with heads uncovered, arms laid aside, and girdles loosed, they received the kiss of peace, to which each was admitted by the lord marshal, in confirmation of their reconciliation. Each was also, by indenture, bound in a large penalty, payable to the apostolic chamber, to adhere to his present engagements with true faith and loyalty. We may form some judgment of the dismembered and distracted state of Ireland, when we find that the number of Irish chiefs who submitted to Richard was no less than seventy-six, all of whom exercised a petty royalty within their respective districts, governed their subjects, led forth their little armies, were jealous of their dignity, and blindly attached to their own unrefined customs and manners.

Richard was highly elated at what he deemed the reduction of Ireland; he led his new vassals to Dublin, and entertained them with that pomp and splendour he so much loved, and of which he had prepared for the display, by transporting all the regalia to Ireland. Unlike the Duke of Clarence, he treated the Irish chiefs with particular condescension. Not so the courtiers; regarding them as of inferior race, they rudely importuned

the haughty chieftains with such questions as argued the meanest opinion of their understandings and manners, and were answered with indignation and affected dignity. Four of the chieftains were made especial objects of favour. They were told that the king was willing to confer the honour of knighthood upon them. They declared themselves astonished that this should be considered as any accession to their dignity. It was an honour they had received in their earliest years, and now stood in no need of a new creation. The ceremonial, however, was described minutely to the chiefs, with the honours it conferred, and they consented to submit to its formalities. Accordingly, they with some others received knighthood in the cathedral of Dublin. The ceremony was succeeded by a magnificent feast, at which the four Irish princes appeared in robes of state, seated at the king's table.* The degenerate English, who had united with the enemy, kept at a distance from the court, employing agents to effect their pardon. Oppression, they said, had driven them from their allegiance, and as their other extenuating allegations were not entirely destitute of ground, Richard, in his present state of elated vanity and luxurious ease and gaiety, was well disposed to admit their excuses. He hastily granted them a truce for some months, and continued his magnificent display of sovereign power and dignity in the capital. In the meantime, vain of what he considered

* Richard lived in a more sumptuous manner than, perhaps, any of his predecessors. His household consisted of 10,000 persons. He had 300 in his kitchen, and other offices were in proportion. This enormous train had tables sup-

plied them at the king's expense, according to the mode of the age. Such prodigality was doubtless the fruitful source of popular discontents, as exactions must have been made to supply the wants of these court retainers.

the almost perfect success of his expedition, he communicated his achievements in due form to his uncle of York, whom he had left régent in England. He pointed out three distinctive classes in Ireland: the Irish enemies, the rebels of both races, and the English subjects. The first, he declared had submitted—the rebels, he apprehended, had received just provocation, and he was therefore disposed to grant them a general pardon; but in this point he desired the advice of his uncle. York, although far from possessing an active spirit, or comprehensive understanding, plainly discovered the vanity of his royal nephew, and the indolence which had caused him, with a precipitant facility, to wish to conclude a deceitful and precarious accommodation with those, who, to be completely subdued to a peaceable and dutiful obedience, required a vigorous prosecution. He qualified his reply, however, by attributing the incautious ease of Richard to the superior opportunities he had of judging of the circumstances and affairs of Ireland, merely recommending the exaction of proper fines from all those to whom the royal mercy was extended. Soon after this, Richard was earnestly requested to return to England. This request was enforced by the presence of the Archbishop of York, and Bishop of London, who were deputed to attend the king in Ireland, to represent to him the danger of the church, from the increasing influence of the Lollards, or followers of Wickliffe. The late queen had greatly favoured these reformers, and they were secretly, not avowedly countenanced, by many of the nobility, excepting the Duke of Lancaster, who scrupled not to avow his encouragement of the new principles, even appearing openly in court, in order to give countenance to Wickliffe during his trial. The prelates of York

and London earnestly besought the king to defend their church from the dangerous innovations of this heresy, affecting to place their reliance on his piety and authority, as the only human means of preserving the purity of the faith from ruin, concluding their arguments by pathetically entreating his return to England without delay.

The king was not deficient in zeal for the established religion, nor insensible of the honour of extirpating heretical depravity. He hastened some regulations relative to Ireland, revived and ratified ordinances deemed salutary, appointed Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, his vicegerent, and embarked for England, after a residence of nine months in Ireland, where he had, in fact, effected nothing. The only stipulation of any real consequence which had been made, was that whereby the Irish of Leinster were bound to evacuate the province; when the royal army withdrew, an infraction of this treaty quickly followed. In consequence, the flame of war, smothered for a while, once more broke out; into the details of which we shall not enter, though it was deemed a sufficient pretence for Richard to propose a second Irish expedition. The discontents in England flowing from a vicious government, had prepared the way for a violent revolution; and in that moment of apparent tranquillity, which, like the awful stillness that precedes a conflict of the elements in the natural world, is the usual portent of a dangerous hurricane in the moral or political system:—in that deceitful moment of calm, Richard, vainly relying on an established power, formed his resolution of revisiting Ireland.

In the spring of the year, 1399, his preparations were completed, the sums extorted to raise which, afforded a fair pretence for inflaming the

irritated passions of his people. York was left regent, and the Duke of Aumerle, his son, was instructed to follow Richard with a reinforcement. When arrived at Bristol, reports of secret conspiracies and intended insurrections were afloat. They reached the king, and determined him to send a peremptory mandate to the Earl of Northumberland, instantly to join his standard. This suspected noble refused to obey, but in gentle and dutiful terms, pleading various plausible reasons. Richard, with infatuated credulity, felt little alarm at the evasion, and contenting himself with proclaiming the earl a traitor, and declaring his lands forfeited, proceeded in his embarkation, and shortly arrived with his train at Waterford. Six days were here wasted in vain parade. Fourteen more in Kilkenny, expecting the Duke of Aumerle. The inconsiderate Richard recollected not that Leinster, which was to be the seat of war, was already wasted by hostilities, and was utterly incapable of supporting the army he brought. The enemy, well aware of the difficulties into which he was hurrying himself, secretly exulted and affected to rejoice that the period was quickly approaching, when English usurpation should be overthrown. The whole process of this futile expedition demonstrated the weakness of the leader, and the treachery and ill faith of those he could not conquer. After enduring great hardships he arrived at Dublin with a suffering and enfeebled army. He was here joined by Aumerle, in whom he placed a blind confidence, and whose excuses for delay he readily admitted. Richard resided six weeks at Dublin, while a part of his forces were detached against the enemy. Tempestuous weather and contrary winds had cut off intelligence from England during this period of rest, when at

length a bark arrived, bearing the tremendous intelligence of his utter ruin. Dismayed at the news of the invasion and successful progress of his rival, Richard became nearly paralyzed with the magnitude of the shock. His council advised that he should instantly return to England; Aumerle prevailed on him to stay until his whole army could be at once transported; Salisbury was dispatched to collect the Welshmen, who hastened to his standard, impatient for Richard's arrival; but disappointed at the delay, and shocked at his infatuated apathy, dispersed. When the king did arrive, the desperation of his affairs was complete. He was abandoned by his friends, and deserted by his subjects. Artifice was employed to prevent his seeking refuge, either by returning to Ireland or passing to France. But betrayed into the power of his rival, the result was his deposition and death.

Many insuperable obstacles arose to the settlement and reformation of Ireland, from the bloody factions, the foundation of which was laid by the accession of Henry of Lancaster to the throne of England. A reign of security there, could alone render it probable that the monarch could attend to the distant part of his dominions, or give him leisure to appreciate its importance, or be mindful of its improvement. Among the fair professions of Henry, however, on his accession, the affairs of Ireland were declared to be the particular object of his attention. A subsidy was granted by the English parliament for its service, and an order was issued for reviving and enforcing the statute against absentees. The archbishops of Armagh and Dublin, deputed by the Irish parliament to repair to the king, were graciously received. Thomas, Duke of Lancaster, Henry's second son, was appointed vicegerent of Ireland,

where the domestic disorders had been aggravated by invasions of the Scots, who were welcomed by the native Irish as auxiliaries against the English.

1402. The arrival of the duke promised relief. Complaints were graciously received, and redress promised. Every thing seemed to augur well of the government; but one fierce Irish insurgent, Art M'Murchad, effectually disturbed the returning tranquillity; and although many salutary provisions were made to avert the consequences of a state of rebellion and warfare, the administration of Lancaster was not marked by any important results. When he endeavoured to contend with the insurgents, he was vigorously opposed. Even under the very walls of Dublin he was wounded, his forces repelled, and although many preparations were made to retrieve his fortune, he soon after returned to England, leaving the public defence to his deputy, Butler, prior of St. John of Jerusalem.

The English thus in effect abandoned to their own resources and expedients, were subjected to the perpetual incursions of the Irish, who daily advanced their power, and enlarged their borders, while the restless factions of the English lords deprived the government of its necessary support. The active prior of Kilmainham marched against the enemies of the public peace, at the head of some Irish who professed themselves well affected, but in a moment of peril abandoned their leader, and exposed his life to imminent danger. The borderers were at length driven to secure themselves against the Irish by bribes and pensions. This dishonourable concession was subsequently reduced into an annual stipend, known by the name of Black Rent, payable to the powerful Irish chieftains, to ensure their protection. This

was a high gratification of their pride, as it seemed like a recognition of their ancient sovereignty.

Such was the wretched state of Ireland, during the turbulent and distracted reign of Henry IV., during which penal acts were for the first time enacted against heresy. It was enacted, that when any heretic who relapsed, or refused to abjure his opinions, was delivered over to the secular arm by the bishop or his commissaries, he should be committed to the flames by the civil magistrate, before the whole people. It will readily be believed that this law did not remain a dead letter among the clergy. The commons who had been required to grant supplies, proposed in an early part of this reign, and that in very plain terms to the king, that he should seize all the temporalities of the church, and employ them as a perpetual fund for the exigencies of the state. The king, however, discouraged the suggestion, but the commons returned to the charge a few years after. They insisted that the clergy possessed a third of the lands of the kingdom, and that their riches disqualified them for performing their ministerial functions with proper zeal and attention. This bold application was accompanied with an address for mitigating the statutes against the Lollards, a plain indication from what source the application emanated. The commons were answered with severity by the king; and further to approve his zeal for the church, which his policy dictated, he ordered a Lollard to be burned before the dissolution of the parliament. These transactions certainly breathe a portion of the struggling spirit which suddenly burst forth in the Reformation.

If the care which Henry found necessary in defending a crown, which he had obtained by

very equivocal means, gave him little opportunity to look beyond the immediate seat of his government, the military genius and the circumstances of France calling them into action, equally prevented his high-spirited successor from attending to unhappy Ireland. Amidst the dazzling objects of his ambition, Henry totally disregarded a part of his dominions, which might have furnished objects worthy a patriot king to pursue. Sir John Stanley was appointed governor, and the period of his power was marked with cruel exactions, extorted with obdurate violence during its short continuance ; it began in October, 1413, and ended in January ensuing, by his decease.

The election of the Irish council appointed Crawley, Archbishop of Dublin, as his successor. Eminent for piety and knowledge, this virtuous prelate was neither by his disposition nor profession fitted to govern a discontented people, rendered irritable by sufferings, or to repel a violent and proud enemy. The realm seemed at the point of sinking into ruin, under the complicated pressure of war and faction, when Lord Furnival, distinguished for military abilities, assumed the reins of government. His measures were decisive, and in a degree successful. The English pale was not enlarged, but it was defended ; yet he seems, like too many of his predecessors, to have governed with partiality, injustice, and oppression ; evils which the English vicegerents were aware could not be closely investigated, and which their remoteness from the supreme seat of government enabled them to impose with impunity on those subjected to their temporary sway.

The prejudices of the English against the Irish, appear at this period to have assumed a highly mischievous excess, so as totally to preclude all idea of conciliation or improvement. To in-

crease the prejudices, we find several causes contributed, amongst which may be ranked the practice of the meanest and most degraded of the Irish resorting to England, in order to seek relief from their wants, or a refuge from the consequences of their crimes. From the conduct of these outcasts, a judgment equally marked by folly and cruelty was formed of the whole race. So great was the number of these emigrants, that the English parliament enacted that all such should be obliged to depart, and this law was executed with such severity and folly, that the most reputable of English race were included in the dishonour of the prohibition. Students resorting to England for education, though expressly exempted from the penalties of the statute, were disdainfully excluded from the inns of court, a narrow and cruel policy, which effectually precluded them from such intercourse as would have removed prejudices, and conciliated interests and affections, and also most flagrantly unjust, as denying them the opportunity of studying those laws to which they were expected to pay obedience. An accumulation of these oppressive and unjust causes at length determined the old English race in Ireland to lay their grievances at the feet of the sovereign; and on his return from the glorious victory of Agincourt they determined to do so. Their petition, fully prepared, was presented to the chancellor, in order to have the great seal of Ireland affixed to it. The chancellor, however, refused to do so, and, of course, the petition could not be transmitted. The refusal naturally tended to inflame that spirit which had given occasion for such a display of contempt. The resentment of the disappointed party brooded in secret, though the governor kept the Irish in awe, and the English province appeared so free from danger, that Botteler, the warlike prior of

Kilmainham, marched into France to the assistance of the king, with fifteen hundred men ; but whether he performed this incongruous service voluntarily or as a vassal does not appear. The oppressive and unjust Furnival was succeeded in the government by the Earl of Ormond, who was invested with such ample powers as indicated the confidence of the crown, and promised to be highly acceptable to the English race.

The answer of the new governor to the address of his parliament, was fraught with assurances of a just, equitable, and impartial administration. The petition to the throne was revived, and conducted through the requisite forms without question. The archbishop of Armagh was one of the appointed agents to present it to the king. This petition is extant, and contains a strong and pathetic representation of the miserable state of the petitioners, entreats the presence of the king, to save his people from destruction, as the Irish who had done homage to King Richard, had long since taken up arms against the English ; notwithstanding their recognizances to the apostolic see, they beseech his highness to lay their conduct before the pope, and prevail on the holy father to publish a crusade against them. While they freely condemn the conduct of many, they make honourable mention of Crawley, Archbishop of Dublin, as well as their then governor. They pray that their churches may be supplied with faithful pastors, without such delays as they had experienced from selfish and designing governors.

It does not appear what particular attention was paid to the several prayers preferred in this petition, but we infer that it was not left unnoticed by the king, as soon after, Merbury, the odious chancellor, of whom it had strongly complained, was removed, and Fitz-Thomas,

prior of the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, substituted in his place.

The Earl of Ormond continued in his government, and gave satisfaction, which, in the existing state of society, was attended with no little difficulty. The infection of party and jealousy pervaded all ranks and degrees, even the clergy, who should have allayed its virulence, and arrested its extension, themselves caught the infection. An English bishop of Lismore accused O'Hedian of Cashel of heinous offences, of which while he accused him, he discovered the true source of his zeal, by adding, that O'Hedian was an enemy to the English nation, never conferred a benefice on any Englishman, and always recommended his brethren to observe the same conduct. On a like ill-grounded or aggravated charge was a bishop of Cork prosecuted by the neighbouring prelate of Cloyne. These ecclesiastic contentions afforded too much encouragement to the narrow-minded jealousies of the laity. Had there been any unity or concert among the Irish race, such was the weakness of the English that they might easily have destroyed them. But as it was, although surrounded by enemies on all sides, yet these enemies were so divided amongst themselves, that they had no idea of being bound by one general permanent interest, and their hatred and jealousy of the English was not superior to that with which they regarded a rival sept.

The accession of the infant Henry VI., and the affairs of France occupying the full attention of his guardians, necessarily prevented any progress of reformation in Ireland, its disorders, on the contrary, if possible, increased. To remedy, if possible, the insufferable evils which pressed upon that unhappy country, the regency of England appointed Edmond, Earl of March and

Ulster, to the government. This earl disdained to administer in his own person, but entertaining the most degraded ideas of the Irish, thought he sufficiently discharged his duty towards such inferior beings, by deputing the Bishop of Meath to govern. This prelate, respectable and venerable in his peculiar station, was yet, both in consequence and rank, inferior to the lords of the old English race. But what was deemed more objectionable by those he was to govern, he was of English race, and strongly imbued with the anti-Irish prejudices of his countrymen. The nobles provoked at this appointment assembled in council, when it was discovered that the prelate's commission was sealed only with his patron's private seal. They demanded a commission under the great seal of either England or Ireland, and great altercations ensued between the English and Irish members of the council. The deputy peremptorily demanded his seat; the archbishop of Dublin, then chancellor, protested against the mode of his appointment, and refused to administer the oaths, or receive him as governor. The nomination of the earl was as warmly supported by some Englishmen of consequence recently arrived. To one of those who demanded that the bishop should be admitted to the exercise of his office, in a haughty and peremptory tone, the archbishop replied with dignity and temper, "Sir, you are a soldier; the borders are harassed, go and repel the enemy; you will thus serve the state more effectually than in this place." After some delay, the council consented to receive the deputy, but with the express declaration that they did so receive him, not from any conviction of the legality of his commission, but from the necessity of public affairs, and to prevent the manifold evils of the suspension of government.

Some idea may be formed of the violence of faction, and the odium which fell unjustly upon the Bishop of Meath, whose private character and conduct were exemplary, that some time subsequent, by infamous confederacy and bribery, he was accused of purloining a chalice from a church in his diocese. A bill of indictment found against him was removed to parliament by certiorari, and the bishop, with a spirit and dignity worthy his high station and sacred function, pleaded his innocence, but demanded that his privileges as an ecclesiastic and lord of parliament should be preserved inviolate. He was referred to his metropolitan, who received his compurgation, and pronounced him innocent. Yet his enemies might still have dared to question it, had not his triumph been made complete by one of the party in the robbery, being seized with remorse, discovered the real perpetrators, and confessed his participation in the crime.

This clerical governor summoned a parliament, which enacted severe penalties against defacers of the king's coin, and other laws. [1423.] The Earl of Ormond, however, soon succeeded him as lord deputy, on account of some alarming commotions. It was during the administration of this nobleman, and of Talbot, Lord Furnival, that the Irish enemy appears to have had a considerable check, and many submissions were made to the English power. It would appear that nothing liberal or refined, nothing virtuous and honourable, could be tolerated in the corrupted society of Ireland, for Ormond, whose character was of that high grade as to have the most beneficial consequences from his example and influence found envy and malevolence surrounded him, and the representations dictated by those hateful passions had so great an effect on the king, that

Ormond was summoned to his presence to answer to charges reflecting severely on his government. Ormond, indignant at the injurious malice of his enemies, like Samuel of old, summoned the nobility and gentry of the pale to attend him at Drogheda, when he boldly appealed to them to point out one single instance in which he had departed from his integrity. "The magnanimity of conscious innocence," says Leland, "could not fail of its effect; honourable testimonies were given of his integrity, the king was addressed in his favour, and his removal was suspended." But his enemies had laid deep their plans, and finally brought them to bear. The virtuous Ormond was removed, and Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, constituted Earl of Waterford; was sent to assume the reins of government, attended by a troop of seven hundred chosen men, [1445.]

The first care of the new vicegerent was to suppress the prevailing commotions. The Irish chieftains were reduced, the degenerate English intimidated, and some of the most daring seized, condemned, and executed. Having quieted the public disorders, the Earl convened a parliament at Trim, to deliberate on the reformation of the state, and the due regulation of the executive government. The government of Talbot was conducted in direct opposition to that of Ormond, as he resigned himself entirely to the faction which had removed that nobleman. At this period, the jealousies and factions existing in England, produced an appointment to the government of Ireland, which had an important and permanent influence upon the affairs of the nation. Ere we enter upon this, however, we will take a rapid and *general* view of the state of the church and of literature;—nothing specifically referring to Ireland is recorded.

Learning which had gradually extended itself for the three last centuries flourished during the fifteenth with considerable luxuriance. Arts and sciences were cultivated with ardour, under the most auspicious encouragements, and recovered a portion of that lustre which had appeared dimmed for ever. Several of the pontiffs became the zealous patrons and protectors of the arts, among whom Nicholas the fifth ranks eminent. The munificence and authority of kings, princes and nobles were also liberally exercised in the civilizing cause, and men of genius were animated to the exercise of their talents, by the honours and rewards promised to the aspirings of genius or the labours of industry. To these happy circumstances the invention of the incomparable art of printing, powerfully contributed, for by it the treasures of wisdom were laid open to the enquiring, and many noble compositions purified the taste, excited the emulation, and animated with a lively and noble ambition men of genius and learning. Amongst the favouring causes of the advancement of literature throughout the western world, we may rank the downfall of the Grecian empire, which lay prostrate beneath Mohammedan ignorance; many exiles were driven from that land of genius and elegance, and bore with them to distant lands the love of learning, and the advantages of true and elegant taste. The precious remains of Grecian antiquity were displayed and illustrated by commentaries possessing degrees of excellence, which perhaps will be rarely surpassed or even equalled. The study of oriental learning and antiquities in general was pursued with ardour and success. But while learning thus rose from its ruins, the Christian church by the corruption, art, and ignorance of its ministers was in a deplorable state, apparently portentous of its

ruin. The most eminent writers of the age, severe as they are, seem not to have exaggerated the causes of their censures, nor had the corrupt advocates of the clergy the courage to call them to account for the boldness of those censures, or even to question the justice and truth of their complaints. Nay, they even virtually acknowledged the justice of their assertions that there was nothing sound even in the visible head or in its members, and that the aid of the secular arm was imperiously demanded to sever the infected parts from those that were more sound, adding that those were justly deemed the best Christians and most useful members of society, who braving the terrors of persecution, and triumphing over the fear of man, boldly inveighed against the Roman pontiff, his venal court, and the whole train of his followers and votaries. These remonstrances and the abuses which called them forth agitated Europe, John Huss and his friend Jerome of Prague were evidences of zeal on one part, and of cruel persecution on the other. The former of these eminent men declaimed against the vices that had corrupted all the orders and ranks of the clergy, nor was he singular, such remonstrances were become common, and were generally approved by the thinking and the wise.

Although the famous council of Constance met with the declared intention of devising means for the reformation of the church, yet did the individual and selfish passions and interests of the several members of the great assembly so clash, and prove obstacles to the salutary work, that the assembly after deliberating three years and a half broke up without effecting any thing. Five years elapsed before another council was assembled at Basle, when some plan of reform was again in vain attempted. The pope sought much to dis-

solve this council but was ultimately obliged to submit to its decisions, and when he persevered in opposition, was pronounced by it in a state of contumacy, for having refused the summons to appear before the assembly. The indignant pontiff opened a rival council and from thence thundered out his sentence of excommunication against that held at Basle, which, exasperated in its turn, solemnly deposed the daring Eugenius from the papacy. Again the furious pope retorted, devoting all the members of this inflexible council to eternal condemnation, declaring all the acts of it null, and proceedings unlawful. These fulminations were derided by the council, the members persisting in their purpose, elected a new pope. This election produced a deplorable schism between two rival pontiffs and councils, and of course all Europe felt the effects of the bitter party spirit created, nor were the dissensions composed until the decease of Eugenius in 1447. A house thus divided against itself, indicated its approaching ruin. It received a temporary apparent stability during the pontificate of Nicholas the fifth who succeeded, eminently qualified as he was for his elevated station. Equally distinguished by his erudition and genius, he was a zealous patron of learned men. Remarkable for his moderation and for the meek and pacific spirit which adorned his conduct and actions, this pontiff evinced to the world a beautiful example of what the head of the church should be. Under his auspicious pontificate the European princes sanctioned, and aided by him exerted all their endeavours to restore peace and tranquillity to the divided church.* (He made the concordat with the Empire.)

* Nicholas the fifth. This eminent and virtuous pontiff fell the victim of his own keen sensibility and sincere religious

The monastic orders were at this period sunk into deplorable degeneracy, and while the more opulent monks drew upon themselves the public odium by unblushing depravity, the mendicants were chargeable with irregularities of another kind. Arrogance, a quarrelsome and litigious spirit, an ambitious desire of encroaching upon the rights and privileges of others; and a disputatious spirit perpetuating the controversies that subsisted between them and the sacerdotal orders; these were among the faults which rendered them very troublesome to society, while their inordinate passion for innovation and novelty caused them to introduce many dangerous and destructive errors into religion. But what contributed greatly to the diminution of the papal power was the separation of these mendicant orders from the church of which they had been such zealous supporters. The more austere and rebellious Franciscans who thus separated themselves, and at the same time renounced their allegiance to the pontiff, were distinguished by the appellation of the *fratercelli* or *minorites*, and as misguided zeal generally passes to extremes, they carried on open war against the court of Rome. They were persecuted with severe excess, but remained unmoved under all the violent means of conversion which marked the spirit of the times. Hunted by inquisitions, many parties of these wretched men took refuge in England, and especially in Ireland. But the series of calamities and persecutions which pursued the miserable sect, did not extirpate it entirely. A few of its votaries remained in Ger-

feelings. The principal cause of his death was the fatal revolution in the Grecian empire, which placed Constantinople in the hands of the Infidels.

This melancholy event preyed upon his spirits and at length ended his valuable life, March. 1455.

many untill the reformation, the cause of which they were prepared to adopt, and readily embraced the doctrines and discipline of Luther.

Among the religious fraternities founded in the fifteenth century, we must not omit to mention that of the brethren of the common life who deserve honourable notice from their eminent usefulness. They lived under the rule of St. Augustine, and greatly contributed to promote the cause of religion, learning, and virtue. This society had been formed during the preceding century by Gerade de Groote, a man eminent for his fervent piety, and extensive erudition, but it was not until the fifteenth century that it was completely organized. It was divided into two classes, the lettered brethren, and the illiterate, who though they occupied separate habitations, lived in the firmest bonds of fraternal union. The clerks applied themselves with zeal and ardour to the study of polite literature, and the education of youth. They composed learned works for the instruction of their contemporaries, and erected seminaries of learning wherever they resided. The illiterate brethren on the other hand were employed in manual labour, and exercised with success the mechanic arts. Neither were under the restraint of religious vows, yet they had all things in common, this community forming the bond of their union. The sisters of this virtuous society lived much in the same manner, employing the hours not consecrated to prayer and reading, in the education of female youth, and in branches of industry suitable to their sex. The schools erected by this fraternity acquired a great and illustrious reputation in this century. From them issued many great men, those immortal restorers of learning and taste, such as Erasmus, Alexander Hegius, and many others. From the

period of the institution of the Jesuits these admirable schools began to decline, so prone are men to change and so caught by novelty. The brethren of the common life were greatly hated by the clergy, who opposed every thing which possessed any tendency to promote learning and taste.

We find mention in this century of schools erected by the Lollards; that term was given to the members of the fraternity we speak of, as a general one of reproach, similar to that of Methodist among us, and to which the prejudiced can affix no definite ideas, though it is used in a tone of contempt or derision. The brethren of the common life were however so distinguished for their industry, virtue, and learning, that they were invited by the authorities of many towns to reside amongst them and to undertake the education of their youth. Religion, generally speaking, was so debased that it was destitute of any thing that could attract the esteem of the virtuous or the wise, those only were called true sons of the church, those only were thought worthy the reputation of possessing Christian knowledge, who professed a profound veneration for the pontiff and his ministers, who studied to render each propitious by frequent and rich donations, who were regular and exact in the use of appointed ceremonies, and who had wealth sufficient to pay the fines of omission, or which were annexed to the commission of different degrees of transgression. Such were the necessary constituents of an ordinary piety; but when was added to those a certain degree of austerity and bodily mortification, such were placed in the higher order of worthies, and considered as the peculiar favourites of heaven. In regard to the ceremonials of religion, it is only necessary to say that it was reduced to a mere show, composed of pompous ab-

surdities and splendid trifles. But if this view of religion, appears as it must, unpleasing and unattractive, it cannot be destitute of instruction, it will teach us to draw a grateful comparison, and to rejoice that the mists have cleared away and left the illuminating glory open to our view. If we but fix our steadfast view upon it, will but open our souls to its heavenly beam, it will console and enliven our onward path, and ensure our eternal felicity. Many were the individuals who, losing their long accustomed dependence upon human writings, took the Bible in their hands, and studied its divine precepts until fervour possessed their whole souls, and the majesty of the divine word was revered and acknowledged as the only guide in all cases of doubt. Thus while the supporters of ecclesiastical domination attained a height of wickedness in theory, and an audaciousness of practice which justly called forth the voice of censure and abhorrence from the reflecting, a light was beginning to beam on the nations of Europe which disclosed to men the lustre of scripture truths, and their vital importance to the well being of man, leading the way to a revolution in religion, the consequences of which reached, and shall continue to affect millions of rational and immortal beings till time shall be no more.

CHAPTER X.

Weakness and incapacity of Henry—Richard, Earl of March and Ulster appointed to the government of Ireland—Accepts it conditionally—His designs—Returns to England—Ormond his deputy is summoned to England, appoints the archbishop of Armagh—Is remanded to Ireland, does not long survive—Edward Fitz Eustace obtains the government—Reconciliation of the King and Duke of York, he is restored to his Irish government—Obtains possession of the king's person, and determines to strengthen his own interest in Ireland—Government entrusted to Earl of Kildare—Duke driven for refuge to Ireland, received with ardour—His cause warmly espoused—Is declared Henry's successor—Falls at the Battle of Wakefield—English interest in Ireland declines—Corrupt government—Battle of Wakefield—Earl of Kildare chosen governor—Accession of Edward the fourth—Duke of Clarence appointed to the lieutenancy of Ireland for life—Change of parties in consequence—Earl of Ormond attainted and executed—Earl of Desmond, governor—Earl of Worcester appointed Lord Deputy—Intrigues against Desmond—Is condemned and executed on false and frivolous charges—Kildare appointed lord deputy—Accession of Henry VII.—Earl of Pembroke appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—Kildare appointed his deputy—Receives the king at Dublin—Earl of Warwick—Irish desire to invade England—Poverty of the government—Henry prepares for resistance—Hostile armies meet at Northampton—Defeat of the Pretender—Papal Bull—Henry pursues pacific measures. Extends his royal grace to Kildare and others—Keating, prior of Kilmainham declared unpardonable—Contests among the Irish—Perkin Warbeck—His proceedings—Consequences—Archbishop of Dublin summoned to attend the king—Received with high consideration—Sir Edward Poyning's is sent to Ireland—His measures—English Chancellor and other civil officers appointed—Conduct of the Irish—Poyning's Law—Act of attainder passed against Earl of Kildare—Interview between the King and Earl of Kildare—Triumph of Kildare—Execution of Warbeck and two of his Irish adherents—Henry has recourse to papal authority—Proceed-

ings of Kildare's government—English power revives in Ireland—The dawn of the reformation—Monastic orders instituted—Jesuits—Attachment of Ireland to Rome.

THE weakness and incapacity of Henry the sixth rendered him a mere cypher under the controul of those by whom he was surrounded, and awakened the ambition of the House of York, whose claims to the throne had not been forgotten during the reign of two Lancastrian princes. Edmund, Earl of March and Ulster, who died suddenly in Ireland, was descended by the female line from Lionel Duke of Clarence, second son of Edward the third, and of course possessed a superior right to the throne, to that of the descendants of the Duke of Lancaster, the third son of that monarch. On the decease of Edmund, the rights of the family devolved on his brother Richard, who was endowed with all the qualities necessary to support them. Valour and great abilities, prudence in conduct, and benignity of disposition distinguished this nobleman. On the death of the Duke of Bedford he had been appointed regent in France, and there for some years supported the interests of England. He had enjoyed an opportunity of displaying his talents for government and the virtues of his character, during the period of his regency in France, and although recalled from that command by intrigue, he was soon sent to suppress a rebellion in Ireland. He accepted the appointment but made his conditions, which he determined should be such as to confer honour and authority most ample upon himself. He stipulated to hold the government for ten years; to receive the entire revenue of Ireland without obligation of accounting for disbursement, with an immediate advance of two thousand

marks, and an annual pension of two thousand more from England, to be empowered to let the king's lands, to dispose of all offices, to levy such forces as he should judge necessary, to name his deputy, and to return at his pleasure. His government opened with all the splendour which these conditions indicated, and in such a manner as to recommend him to popular favour, and to increase the number of his adherents in the design he meditated, to assert his claim to the crown of England. In the meantime the partizans of his family in that kingdom were vigilant in watching opportunities to favour his interests. The insurrection of Cade was supposed to have originated in the duke, who is said to have employed and encouraged him to excite the discontents of the people. It was so strongly rumoured that York had raised this insurrection, that he was forming designs against the king, and intended to conduct an Irish army into England, that orders were dispatched along the coasts intimating his traitorous designs, and directing that his landing should be opposed. The announcement of these fears injured the royal cause, as it led people to examine into the claims of the duke. They also formed a fair pretence for him to return to England to justify his conduct and to guard against the designs of his enemies. He accordingly embarked, eluded the opposition on the coast of Wales, and soon made his appearance in London, but without any army, and with such a train as could give no fair or plausible cause of complaint. The pretensions of this nobleman it is unnecessary to add led to the bloody civil wars between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, which during forty years deluged the unhappy kingdom in blood, and occasioned the ruin of most of the ancient nobility, who perished either

on the scaffold or in the field. It does not distinctly appear what particular provisions this prince made at his departure, for the administration of Ireland, where he had succeeded in attaching to his person the whole of the nation. But it appears singular that he should constitute the duke of Ormond, a zealous Lancastrian, his deputy. Ormond summoned a parliament at Drogheda under the title of deputy to the duke, and was soon after created Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by the king, but his presence being necessary in England he appointed the archbishop of Armagh his deputy. The appointment of an Ecclesiastic to a government which required military abilities, either encouraged disorders or awakened apprehensions of them, and the earl was remanded to Ireland. He did not long survive the resumption of his power, and the administration devolved on Sir Edward Fitz Eustace a martial character well fitted for the station. On the apparent reconciliation of the king and Duke of York, and the retiring of the latter into Wales, he was restored to his Irish government, or at least acknowledged as vicegerent. The absence of the Duke of York had encouraged the native Irish to several petty quarrels. Innumerable incursions and expeditions in different quarters of the island took place, but are unworthy of notice or detail. In the meantime, the victory of St. Albans giving the duke possession of the king's person, and the whole authority of the crown, he determined to strengthen his interest in Ireland. Fitz Eustace was removed and the government entrusted to the earl of Kildare, whose family had formed a strict connection with the Duke of York during his residence in Ireland. Various causes contributed to render the period of his power more tranquil than usual.

The spirit of Margaret in 1452, renewed the contests with the Yorkists, and the duke was betrayed, defeated, and driven for refuge into Ireland. He was received with ardour and affection, and notwithstanding his adherents were deemed rebels and traitors, and he himself attainted, the Irish espoused his cause and resolved to support it with their lives, and although it would lead us too far to detail them, numerous instances occur to prove that this zeal was genuine, and manifested in essential acts of service to the duke. Some attempts made by the royal party to seize the person of the duke, and some of his adherents only served to rouse the indignation of his partizans in the Irish parliament, and to expose the agents to their vengeance. By thus mingling in the contests of England, the Irish were flattered into an opinion of their own consequence, and even their vanity seemed to increase their zeal.

Edward, the son of Duke Richard, had accompanied his father to Ireland, and to him the attachment of the people was also displayed. When the victory gained at Northampton by the Yorkists, once more called the duke from Ireland, his adherents attended him in great numbers with the strongest professions of resolution and fidelity. The district of Meath in particular was almost exhausted of its inhabitants, enabling the duke to appear at the head of a gallant and formidable troop. After having been declared Henry's successor by a parliament surrounded and intimidated by his forces, he with five thousand followers, mostly Irish, was encountered at Wakefield by the queen's forces amounting to twenty thousand men. Unable to resist a force so superior, the termination was fatal to the duke, who with numbers of his adherents fell in the bloody contest. The diminution of the English interest in Ireland,

the result of these affairs, was quickly perceived by the vigilant eyes of the old natives, and the usual disturbances were renewed. The contest for the crown of England principally affected Ireland by giving the opportunity to those entrusted with the government to exercise their authority severely and intemperately, for amidst the national disorders in England, little attention was given to the conduct of those to whom authority was delegated in Ireland. The fatal action of Wakefield created a great sensation, however, in a country to which the Duke of York was much endeared. When the feelings of public sorrow for his loss had somewhat subsided, the council proceeded to exercise their ancient rights of electing a governor until the royal pleasure should be known, and on this occasion demonstrated their attachment to the house of York, for Thomas Earl of Kildare was chosen. He summoned a parliament, and it was prorogued when intelligence arrived of the deposition of Henry the sixth, and that Edward the fourth was seated on the throne. Kildare was confirmed in his appointment, but was quickly superseded by the appointment of George Duke of Clarence to the lieutenancy of Ireland for life, and of course parties changed. The Earl of Ormond, who had been one of the first victims to the revenge of the triumphant Yorkists, was attainted and executed upon a scaffold. We cannot enter into the various circumstances which marked the government of the Earl of Desmond, who had marched against the insurgents; after many fluctuations in his power it appeared to be gaining stability, when the affairs in England once more shook his authority, by giving free course to the virulence of his enemies, and thereby precipitating his ruin. In consequence of the union of Edward with Elizabeth

Grey, the interests of her family were objects of his attention. He created her father Earl of Rivers, and further dignified him with the appointment of lord high constable of England. Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, had filled that eminent station, but resigned it in favour of Rivers, and to compensate for the relinquishment, the office of lord deputy of Ireland was conferred upon him, with honourable and extensive powers. This appointment created much satisfaction to the enemies of the Geraldine family. All those who had, or imagined they had been oppressed by their power, or insulted by their pride, crowded to the new governor with various malicious and false charges against Desmond, whom they accused of an intention of renouncing his allegiance, and to make himself independent sovereign of Ireland. It is stated that the queen had been offended at some disrespectful expression of Desmond in regard to her family, and that the new governor was directed by her, to execute the most severe measures towards him should any thing be found against him to justify the penalties of the law. Tiptoft was disposed to treat with rigour and severity the individual thus marked for his vindictive attention, and to second the designs of Desmond's enemies. He with some others were charged with "alliance, fostering and alterage with the king's Irish enemies, for furnishing them with horses, harness and arms, and supporting them against the king's subjects, declaring their goods and lands forfeit, and that whoever shall not discover their goods to the Earl of Worcester within fourteen days after the rising of the parliament shall be attainted of felony." Desmond was condemned and executed on these charges. The laws on which he was condemned had neither been uniformly obeyed nor strictly executed, and

he doubtless fell the victim of a factious animosity. Some ineffectual attempts were made to revenge his death by a surviving branch of the family, but an attainder followed the manifestation of zeal. Yet the triumph of the enemies of this illustrious house was short lived. The earl of Kildare hastened to the king, related the injuries done to his family, was favourably heard, and received his pardon. His attainder was reversed and his estate and dignity restored. To complete his triumph he was constituted lord deputy in the place of Tiptoft, who was called away by the disorders of England, and by a just retribution suffered by a similar sentence to that which he had executed upon Desmond.

It is evident from even the single incident we have named, that the most violent and worst passions of the human heart were continually kept alive and exasperated in this state of fluctuating and jealous government. It would be tedious to follow the changes of this distempered state, it must be sufficient to say that such alarming accounts were communicated to Edward of the situation of his Irish dominions, that he deemed it necessary to summon to his presence the earl of Kildare, the archbishop of Dublin, and others, in order to be distinctly informed of the nature and causes of such disorders, and to devise means whereby they might be obviated, or removed. The result was the government being vested in Kildare during the space of four years, many privileges being conferred to favour its tranquillity and just authority. Kildare enjoyed his administration, unrivalled and prosecuted the usual authority without any considerable difficulty or interruption. To increase his influence and improve the friendly dispositions of the Irish, the sister of Kildare was united to Con O'Nial, son to

the chieftain of the north, distinguished as the first in pride and power of the Hibernian lords. The earl continued to exercise his power during the remainder of Edward's reign, the succession of Edward the fifth and the usurpation of Richard ; a period in which Ireland presented no new aspect. The contests of the old natives with each other, and the necessary provisions for the defence and security of the English settlements, still continuing as heretofore. Some Irish septs lived peaceably in the English countries, and some even received pensions in reward of their services in repelling invaders. Others maintained an independent state even in the neighbourhood of Dublin, so that the earl deputy found it expedient to relax the severity of former statutes, and to empower the Archbishop of Dublin to present *Irish* clerks to benefices within their respective districts for the space of two years. The Irish so zealously attached to the house of York, heard the intelligence of the revolution which placed Henry the seventh on the throne with great discontent, naturally expecting great changes in the government. The new king elevated his uncle Jasper Earl of Pembroke, to the dukedom of Bedford, and appointed him lord lieutenant of Ireland. But as this station had been for a considerable time conferred on princes of the blood royal, who acted by deputy, it continued to be so in the present instance, and to the astonishment of all, Kildare was appointed, and the other offices of state also continued without change or addition. Whatever might be the motives of Henry for this measure, whether a generous confidence, or a fear of sudden changes in a political state, already weak and disordered, it certainly gave his enemies a dangerous power, the disquieting effects of which, he subsequently too amply experienced.

The influence of the deputy, and his firm attachment to his party very soon appeared in the violence of one of his adherents.

An individual named Keating, who was prior of Kilmainham, having much intermeddled in the political contests of Ireland, had in the assurance of party support, alienated the revenues, and even had the audacity to sell the ornaments and reliques of his house. He was for this sacrilegious offence deprived by his principal, the grand master of Rhodes, and an Englishman of distinguished family named Lomley, was appointed to succeed him. Immediately on his landing, however, to take possession, he was assailed by the furious Keating with a band of armed men, and compelled to resign the instruments of his election. Lomley in consequence appealed both to the king and the grand master; the result was the excommunication of Keating, which so highly exasperated him, that he caused his rival once more to be seized, cast him into prison, where he languished without redress, and at length died, nor could Keating be dispossessed, notwithstanding his great and repeated offences. This instance offers but a gloomy picture of oppression, and the utter degeneracy of religion.

Although nothing appears during the period we are now reviewing, which is pertinent to the design of this work, yet in order to preserve its connection, we must take a cursory glance at the political events which agitated the government of our seventh Henry, in which Ireland bore no inconsiderable share, and in which it will be apparent that although the rival houses of York and Lancaster were united under one head, yet that the revenge which had influenced the passions of the opposite faction was by no means extinct. The severe and impolitic severity which

Henry betrayed for every individual of the house of York, the attention he gave to exalt the Lancastrian party, and to depress the opponents of it, very naturally fomented discontents, and rendered him extremely unpopular, which was increased by the reserve and stateliness of his demeanour, tending as it did to promote fear rather than affection and good-will. The effects of this want of popularity soon appeared by incidents of a curious nature. The jealousy of the king respecting the family of York, was evinced by his retaining a prisoner, Edward Plantagenet Earl of Warwick, son of the Duke of Clarence. A rumour of this young prince's escape filled the nation with joy, and betrayed the latent disaffection towards the king. This manifestation of public feeling induced a designing priest in Oxford named Richard Simon to take the extraordinary measure of raising up a pretender to the throne. For this purpose he fixed upon Lambert Simnel, a baker's son, about fifteen years of age, and endowed with a capacity and superior manners which well calculated him for the part he was to perform, Simon determined to try the effect of his imposture first in Ireland, knowing that country was zealously attached to the house of York, and bore an affectionate regard to the memory of Clarence. In his designs, Simon was zealously, though secretly encouraged and abetted by the queen dowager, the widow of Edward, whose spirit, restless and enterprising, could not well brook the insignificance into which she had fallen, while it was constantly irritated by perceiving her daughter treated with coldness and contempt by her royal consort, all her friends objects of his suspicion and kept in subjection. A hatred deep and powerful filled her breast against the king, and she was active in any means likely to disturb

his government, or to occasion popular discontents, hence the scheme of Simon met with her ready concurrence and zealous assistance. Simnel and his subtle tutor arrived in Dublin, was introduced to Kildare in all the dignity of the character he assumed, claiming his protection as the unfortunate Warwick; Kildare, who was perhaps prepared for the application, communicated the circumstances to his brother and some other zealous Yorkists, they received the adventurer with every mark of respect and affection, and at once resolved to devote themselves to his service. But in order to make experiment of the popular feeling before they publicly declared themselves, they contrived to have the report circulated, that the Earl of Warwick was arrived in Dublin, without any other circumstance or hint of the intentions of the chief governor. The citizens however quickly caught the flame of party zeal, they unanimously declared in favour of Warwick. In a frenzy of faction, and fond of novelty which flattered their vanity, they overlooked the daughters of Edward the fourth, who stood before Warwick in the right of succession, paid the pretended prince attendance as their sovereign, lodged him in the castle of Dublin, crowned him with a diadem taken from the statue of the virgin, and publicly proclaimed him king under the appellation of Edward the sixth. The whole island followed the example of the capital, and not a sword was any where unsheathed in Henry's quarrel. Octavian de Palatio, primate of Armagh, though a foreigner and unconnected with the Irish factions, seems first to have joined in the confederacy, but to have speedily repented and receded. The citizens of Waterford, the prelates of Cashel, Tuam, Clogher, and Ossory, the family of Butler and the Baron of Hoath were the only persons

who joined not in the popular credulity, but utterly unable to defend the interests of their sovereign, they could but dispatch their emissaries to inform him of the commotions that had been excited. Henry's fears were ever ready to take alarm, and the events in Ireland were important enough to justify them. The queen dowager, who was believed to be a considerable agent in the conspiracy, was seized and confined in a nunnery, while to prove the falsity of the pretender in Ireland, Warwick was taken from the tower, and exhibited in a procession to St. Paul's cross. This produced the effect designed in London, but the Yorkists of Ireland had gone too far to be restrained by such devices. The charge of artifice and imposture was retorted upon the king, and the Warwick who had been exhibited was stated to be an impostor, whom the king had tricked out, and profanely abused the awful ceremony of a religious procession in order to give colour to his traitorous falsehood. Emissaries were sent to England, and it soon became known that notwithstanding all the precautions of Henry, the cause of the pretender was likely to receive powerful support, and it was espoused in a quarter little expected. Margaret of York, aunt to Warwick, and widow of Charles, Duke of Burgundy, a princess of ardent and sanguine spirit, detesting Henry as the oppressor of her family, gave her zealous support to the supposed Warwick. After consulting with Richard, Lord Lovel, and John, Earl of Lincoln, who had both engaged in the insurrection, the dutchess hired a body of two thousand veteran Germans and sent them to Ireland, headed by a brave and experienced officer named Martin Swart, and accompanied by these two noblemen. The countenance given by persons of such high rank, and the accession of this

military force flattered the vanity and raised the courage of the Irish. Uncontrolled in Ireland, except by the impotent dissent of some individuals, they imagined that no great difficulties could be experienced in England, and fancied themselves already possessed of sovereign authority, and invested with all the advantages to be expected from a revolution. The pretender having been crowned as we have related, issued his writs of summons, convened a parliament, in which laws were enacted, and subsidies granted, vengeance denounced against those who presumed to resist him, and particularly against Waterford, whose possessions and franchises were declared forfeit, on account of perverse opposition. The clergy voted a subsidy to the pope to *soften his resentment*, and to procure absolution from the sentence denounced against the opposers of Henry. In short, the whole machinery of government moved under the name of Edward the sixth. When men of sanguine tempers enter on the career of ambition and enterprise, they easily possess their imaginations with the vast advantages they shall derive from success. The impulse thus given to a few, soon extends itself to many who are too inexperienced or too unthinking to reflect upon obstacles. Thus was it with the adherents of the pageant king in Ireland, they pressed clamorously to be led into England. The resolution suited the necessities of the state, for all the resources which could be extorted from the new king's Irish subjects, were unequal to the support of his establishment, and the maintenance of his household.

Necessity thus according with the excited passions of the people, the measure was soon adopted, and the embarkation for England prepared. Henry, not ignorant of the motions of his

enemies, prepared himself for defence; and to gratify the people by an appearance of piety, he visited the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, a great scene of popular devotion, where he offered his prayers and vows for deliverance. On his return to London, he was informed that Simnel was landed at Foudrey in Lancashire. The hostile armies met at Stoke, in the county of Northampton, a bloody battle ensued; the king's victory, although purchased by loss, was entirely decisive; Lincoln, Lovel, Broughton, and Swart perished in the field of battle, with four thousand of their followers. Simnel, with his tutor Simon, was taken prisoner. Simon, being a priest, was not tried at law, but was committed to close custody. Simnel was pardoned, made a scullion in the king's kitchen, and subsequently advanced to the rank of falconer. Kildare remained in Ireland, but his brothers, Lords Thomas and Maurice Fitz Gerald, followed the fortunes of Simnel, and fell in his cause. Thus passed away the golden dreams of the credulous Irish; nothing now was reserved to them but the resentment of the severe monarch they had offended. Letters arrived from Henry to the citizens of Waterford, commending their conduct, and encouraging them to persevere in a brave and loyal opposition to the Earl of Kildare and the citizens of Dublin. A papal bull was directed to those prelates who had not been accused of the rebellion, the Archbishops of Cashel and Tuam, the Bishops of Clogher and Ossory, to inflict the usual ecclesiastical censures on the delinquent clergy, in which number were involved the primate of Armagh, though he had refused to assist at the coronation of Simnel, the Archbishop of Dublin, and the prelates of Meath and Kildare. The storm of vengeance thus collecting, to avert its violence

the lord governor and other lords hastened to acknowledge their error, and to propitiate by promises the anger of Henry. Many circumstances rendered pacific measures the best course of policy. Henry, therefore, contented himself for the present with answering the submissions of his subjects by declarations of pardon, attended, however, with severe reflections on their folly and disloyalty. Kildare, in particular, was assured that the royal grace must entirely depend upon his future loyal and dutiful conduct, was strictly enjoined to support the king's interest, and under these conditions was not removed from his government. To ensure the fulfilment of the pledged promises, an officer of Henry's household, in whom he placed great confidence, was sent into Ireland with a troop of five hundred men, to oblige the subjects to renew their oaths of allegiance, and to tender the royal pardon upon such conditions as might assure the king of their future loyalty.

After some hesitation on the part of the high-spirited Kildare, who persisted in dictating the terms on which he would accept his pardon, homage and fealty were performed in a solemn and public manner by all the nobles who had joined the insurrection, they were absolved from the pope's anathema. The prelates of Dublin, Meath, and Kildare, with many abbots and priors submitted in like manner, and received a similar absolution; and such were the general prevarications respecting promises and obligations, and so various were the devices for violating the most awful sanctions, that the oaths were administered with every circumstance that could strike the mind with terror and veneration. Many of these circumstances would appear perfectly ridiculous to us, and strongly mark the height of supersti-

tion, which was dignified with the name of religion. For instance, Sir R. Edgcombe, the king's commissioner, in his account of the ceremony, is exact in specifying, that the host on which the Irish lords were sworn, had, by stipulation, been consecrated by a chaplain of his own, on whom he had particular reliance. With his patent of pardon, Kildare was presented with a chain of gold, in token of grace and reconciliation from the king. The citizens of Dublin, Drogheda, and Trim, the primate of Armagh, and other offending clergy, were received into favour, and swore allegiance. The royal favour, however, was denied to Plunket, chief justice, and to the infamous prior of Kilmainham, who had warmly espoused the cause of Simnel. Plunket was subsequently pardoned at the intercession of many, but Keating was declared unpardonable. He was ejected from his office of constable of Dublin castle, obliged to save himself by flight, and ended a life disgraced by faction, contention, and crime, in the most abject poverty and contempt.

Historians have not always the pleasure thus to mark moral retribution, as it is not always to be expected to take place in the present state of human existence, but when it does occur, how much it heightens the interest of the narrative, and satisfies the indignant feelings which have been aroused by the detail of criminal conduct. But this general pardon did not at once allay the jealousies and animosities of rival lords, or extinguish the heated spirit of party. Those few who had remained loyal, rating their services highly, incessantly solicited for favours and preferments, inveighed against their recent oppressors, and represented to the king that they themselves were alone worthy of his confidence. Octavian, the primate of Armagh, was assiduous

in his efforts to supplant Kildare, representing the necessity of being appointed chancellor, in order to form a balance against the enormous power of the deputy. Kildare was equally vigilant to defeat the purposes of the primate, and employed Payne, the Bishop of Meath, to represent the state of things to the king. Henry, with his characteristic caution and reserve, listened to these representations. He rejected the petition of Octavian, deeming it dangerous to make any present innovations in the Irish government, yet suspicion and fear were excited in his mind, and he summoned Kildare and other lords to his presence. They attended him at Greenwich, and after explanations and expostulations, received a confirmation of the royal grace; all were dismissed with marks of confidence, and gracious assurances of being honoured and distinguished according to their future loyal services. Kildare accordingly resumed his government with full power and consequence, and for some time exercised it in peace and splendour, although the Irish chieftains still continued their usual quarrels. In one of these contests between the kinsman of the deputy and a neighbouring chieftain, Kildare attempted to mediate, but without effect, as it continued till the death of O'Nial, who demanded that his adversary should recognise his superiority by paying him tribute. We name this contest, in order to introduce the laconic determination with which the demand was made and rejected, as it strikingly illustrates the proud and daring spirits of the Irish chieftains. "Send me tribute, or else—," was the message of O'Nial: "I owe you none; and if—," was the brief reply.

These continual contests among themselves kept the English free from any serious incursion,

but the affairs of England were preparing new occasion for the revival of faction. The restless resentment of the Duchess of Burgundy raised up another pretender, one Perkin Warbec, whom she acknowledged as her nephew, Richard Plantagenet, youngest son of Edward IV. The real character, progress, and fortunes of this youth do not properly belong to the present retrospect, but the whole forms a lively instance of the restless nature of resentment, when it gains possession of an ardent heart, and of its dangerous influence on the principles of even the most virtuous. All that is necessary for us to refer to, respecting this adventurer, is that Ireland was fixed upon as the first scene of his pretensions. He landed on the southern coast, without troops or revenue, [1493,] appeared at Cork, in the character of Richard Plantagenet, who had escaped from the Tower, and was received and entertained by the chief magistrate with due honour. Hence he sent letters to the Earls of Kildare and Desmond, acknowledging their loyal attachment to the family of York, notifying his arrival in their country, and entreating their assistance for the recovery of his rights. But, before his appearance could produce any effect in Ireland, he was recalled into France, to answer some political purposes of the French monarch, in forcing Henry VII. to a peace. His short residence in Ireland, was, however, sufficient to inflame the combustible spirit of faction, which generally existed there, to excite rumours and jealousies, and to afford occasion for interested reports and accusations at the court of England, ever ready to listen. Henry, harassed by the perpetual complaints, and impatient of the contradictory reports that reached him respecting his Irish dominions, suddenly required the Archbishop of Dublin to attend him,

and to lay before him a full and clear detail of all the circumstances of his Irish government, which he had administered since the removal of Kildare, effected by the intrigues of his enemies. Lord Gormanston was appointed deputy, during the absence of the archbishop in England, where he was received with favour by the king. The aspect of the venerable Walter commanded respect, but his piety and gravity were more conspicuous than his penetration and abilities. Henry was not deceived by the superficial political knowledge of the archbishop; but his apparent goodness of heart, sincerity, and unaffected integrity, attracted him and won his attention. Walter was entertained at his court in a manner to prove the high consideration with which the monarch regarded him. The interesting historian, Leland, has given us a pleasing anecdote respecting this venerable ecclesiastic, equally marking his simplicity and the king's familiar respect. Walter being present when a foreign ambassador was introduced to Henry, and in a florid harangue expatiated on the glory and renown of the English monarch, Henry turning to the archbishop, desired his opinion of this oration, which his courtiers so applauded. "It pleaseth me well," said Walter, with an undesigning ease and sincerity, "but methinks it flattered your highness too much." "In sooth," replied the king, with great composure, "the very same fault, good father of Dublin, occurred to us, and we were minded to observe it."

Kildare dreaded the representations of this estimable prelate, and on learning his favourable reception, he resolved also to repair to England. The king, who had become convinced of his turbulent disposition, if not absolute disaffection, caused him to be informed, that the articles of accusation brought against him could only be

properly discussed in Ireland, and for this purpose he was to attend a new lord deputy, preparing to embark. This individual was Sir Edward Poynings, an English knight, in whom the king placed great confidence. Ireland had proved such a fit scene for commotion and conspiracy, that Henry found his personal security, as well as the interests of his crown, necessarily rendered the affairs of that country an especial object of his vigilant attention. His first step was to form an entire new administration of the government, composed of men of tried loyalty, and totally unconnected with any of the different factions which had so long raised commotions in Ireland. Sir Edward it was resolved should be attended to his government with a force consisting of about a thousand men. An English chancellor also accompanied him, Dean, Bishop of Bangor, and Prior of Lanthony; Sir Hugh Conway, an English knight, was nominated lord treasurer. The former judges were removed, and English lawyers of repute substituted in their place, and on their arrival were sworn of the privy council.

Though the intention of Henry, in sending Sir E. Poynings thus attended to Ireland, was to quell the commotions of the partizans of the house of York, and to reduce the natives to subjection, yet his forces were not sufficient to accomplish these purposes. The Irish eluded his efforts by flying for refuge to their woods and morasses. The new deputy, however, summoned a parliament at Dublin, in order to enact laws for the reformation of the pale, and to effect salutary restraints of order and polity, to be strengthened and invigorated by proper discipline. In this parliament was passed the memorable statute, still bearing the name of Poynings, which establishes the authority of the English government

in Ireland. "By this statute," says Sir John Davis, "all the former laws of England were made to be of force in Ireland, and no bill can be introduced into the Irish parliament unless it previously receive the sanction of the council of England." This latter law seemed calculated to ensure the dominion of England, but was in fact granted at the desire of the Irish commons, who proposed by that means to secure themselves from the tyranny of their lords, particularly of such lieutenants or deputies as were of Irish birth. Besides some statutes relative to individuals, an act of attainder was passed by this parliament, against Gerald Fitz-Thomas, Earl of Kildare, for treason and rebellion; this was extended to his adherents and kinsmen; thus reducing this noble family, which had so long maintained the first rank in Ireland, to the lowest state of depression and disgrace. The turbulent and seditious conduct of Prior Keating, suggested also a statute, whereby an Englishman alone was to be invested with the priory of St. John of Jerusalem. Sir Edward, however, aware of the unpopularity of the measure, declined taking any cognizance of the accusations against Kildare, when he was subsequently charged with aiding the second attempt of Warbec on Ireland, but sent him prisoner to Henry, to answer for his supposed offences before the throne.

The administration of Sir Edward was so satisfactory to Henry, that he conferred upon him the honour of the Garter, for his distinguished services. Kildare in the meantime was a close prisoner in London, without being heard or confronted with his accusers, while his unhappy wife sunk under the weight of the disgrace attached to him, and her anxiety respecting his ultimate fate. Kildare, thus treated as a close, designing,

and dangerous traitor, was in reality of a character and disposition remarkable for open undesigning simplicity, frequently and easily excited into passion, which rendered him an easy tool to cooler spirits and deeper politicians. The interval he passed in confinement, though so deeply affecting his domestic comforts as to produce the death of a wife whom he tenderly loved, yet was probably favourable to his own cause, as it gave the cautious Henry an opportunity of being informed of his real character, as well as to examine the motives which had actuated his enemies to accuse him of traitorous designs and attempts.

From the historian we have followed, and in so many instances nearly transcribed our illustrations, we now extract the account of the interesting interview of the king with his noble prisoner, as it places in a striking point of view the character of the latter, and also, that Henry was not altogether unsusceptible of those feelings which distinguish ardent and generous minds, and urge them to indulgences not entirely warranted by cautious policy and political prudence. When Kildare was first admitted to the presence of Henry, he was somewhat surprised to see, instead of a dark subtle and desperate conspirator, a man of unrefined, artless, and even awkward simplicity, of a demeanor so easy, so confident, and unrestrained, as seemed to indicate a perfect consciousness of his own innocence. Henry directed him to prepare for his defence, and to provide himself with able counsel, as he feared his cause would require it. "Yea," replied the Earl, "the ablest in the realm," seizing Henry by the hand with an uncourtly familiarity, "Your highness I take for my counsel against these false knaves." The king smiled at the novelty of this address, and the uncouth compliment to his equity

and discernment. He heard his accusers, and found their charges unsupported in every point of moment, to the interests of the crown, and in other matters frivolous and futile. The king soon perceived that the allegations were dictated by private resentment and factious malignity, and was even not displeased to see the culprit treat them with the severity of a superior, as if still in Ireland, and in the fullness of power. As their charges of treason were soon found to amount to nothing more than surmise and suspicion, as the Irish lords, with whom he was said to have conspired against Poynings, gave solemn and satisfactory evidence to exculpate him, the accusers were obliged to recur to his violences, and the injuries they had sustained from him in Ireland, matters in which Henry was not nearly interested. Among other accusations, it was urged, that the earl in one of his lawless excursions, had sacrilegiously burned the church of Cashel to the ground; "Spare your evidence," said Kildare, "I did set fire to the church, for I thought the bishop had been in it," this undesigning manner of pleading the aggravation in excuse of his offence, contributed to cast an air of ridicule upon the prosecutors, not unfavourable to the culprit. They closed their charge with a warm and passionate declaration, "that all Ireland could not govern this earl;" "Well," replied Henry, "this earl shall then govern all Ireland." The triumph of Kildare thus complete, he was restored to his honours and estates, and consulted respecting the affairs of his country. None of the Irish subjects were excluded from the royal grace, except Walter the magistrate of Cork, who had been the first to receive Warbec, and Lord Barry, who had been particularly zealous in his service. The first suffered at Tyburn with the unfortunate youth whose

cause he had espoused, the latter was murdered by an unnatural brother. The commotions of the Irish chieftains still continued, however, notwithstanding the pacific measures of the king. The quelling such insurgents had ever been a burdensome service, exhausting the revenue, and employing the strength of the royal territory; and as they seemed to resist all secular means of subjection, Henry determined to have recourse to papal authority, from which the crown of England still affected to derive the right of sovereignty in Ireland. He hoped this measure would restrain a people, who amidst all their violences were powerfully attached to the Roman Pontiff. By his earnest solicitation, Pope Alexander addressed his commission to the primate of Canterbury, the bishops of London, Durham, Bath and Wells, empowering them to appoint such prelates of Ireland as they should choose, to convene the clergy and laity of Ireland, to inquire into the disorders particularly subsisting in the remoter and less populous parts of the country, to apply effectual remedies to those, both of the clergy and the laity, and to execute all ecclesiastical censures on the refractory and rebellious, for the effectual restoration of order and tranquillity. Kildare, whose generous disposition was won by the confidence and attention of Henry, entered upon his government with a sincere and zealous solicitude to further the interests of the crown, and became more attached to English politics by having formed a marriage union with the family of St. John. He made himself feared and dreaded by the Irish insurgents, and formed some judicious political alliances with chieftains calculated to increase and extend his power.

From this reign it appears indeed, that we may date the revival of the English power in Ireland,

which, from the Scottish war in the reign of Edward the second had gradually declined into a state of weakness and imbecility. The English and the Irish became more assimilated, for although the laws forbade intermarrying with the latter, the influences of intercourse and consequent affection were superior to statutes. Thus the Irish manners and language became very general, even in the very seat of government. We are now quickly approximating to a period, when important and mighty innovations were made in religion, not only affecting the states in which different opinions were agitated, but even those that adhered firmly to the ancient faith and worship. The bond of union among Christians, which had been formed by a blind obedience to the Roman pontiffs, had been gradually relaxing, and seemed now rapidly separating. The happy revolution in the republic of letters had dispelled some of the mists of ignorance, and had enkindled in the minds of men the love of truth and sacred liberty. From the cloud that had so long impended over Europe strong rays beamed forth, with promise of more perfect effulgence. The divines of this century freely disputed upon religious subjects, even calling in question the validity of those doctrines which had hitherto been regarded as essential to salvation. Men could not but perceive from the disregard of the pontiffs and their ministers to every moral obligation that the religion they professed and taught was degenerated into little more than a round of external ceremonies, adapted to dazzle the eye, but little capable of affecting the heart. The authority of the holy mother church, the obligation of implicit obedience to her decisions, the virtues and merits of the saints, and their credit in the court of heaven, the love of the virgin, the efficacy of

relics, the duty of adorning churches, and endowing monasteries, the necessity of good works, (as the phrase was then understood) the intolerable pains of purgatory, and the utility of indulgences were the subjects of declamation among the more serious Romanists. The darkness and superstition of the people may be inferred, for those who presided over the rights and ceremonies of the church, far from evincing the most remote wish or disposition to enlighten the ignorant, cast an additional obscurity around them and rendered more impervious, rather than sought to dispel, the clouds of superstition. Such was the state of religion; hence, to those who possessed any portion of sense or piety, a reformation was ardently desired, nor was the number which possessed those qualities inconsiderable. In their expectations and demands they were moderate, extending not their views to a change of ecclesiastical government, or a suppression of those doctrines rendered venerable by their antiquity, nor even to an abrogation of those rites and ceremonies which had multiplied to such an extravagant height. Their only aim seemed to be to set bounds to the power of the pontiff, to reform the manners of the clergy, and to prevent arts called pious frauds, by which they imposed on the credulous; to dispel the ignorance and correct the errors of the blinded multitude, and to deliver them from the heavy burdens that were imposed upon them on religious pretexts. Even Luther says, "I reject not the authority of the pontiff, provided it is regulated by wholesome laws."

The dawn of the Reformation arose unexpectedly, although, as we have seen, the causes which produced it had been long operating. While the pontiff slumbered in luxurious security

at the head of the church, and saw nothing throughout the vast extent of his dominion but submission, and while the worthy and genuine professors of Christianity almost despaired of their desires being realized, a glimmering ray appeared, from which proceeded a flood of light, destined to illuminate the world, and which shed a high and peculiar interest on the events of history, inseparable from the revolution it created in the mental and moral condition of men.

The period to which we have arrived is, indeed, fraught with circumstances of interest and instruction; men gradually attained that elevated situation with regard to commerce, science, government, police, and cultivation, in which they have since progressively advanced. The arts and sciences were carried in this age to a perfection hitherto unknown. From this renovation of learning, doubtless the church derived signal advantages. Great sums were expended, and much zeal and industry employed in promoting the progress of knowledge, by founding and encouraging literary societies, protecting and exciting a spirit of emulation, and annexing distinguished honours and advantages to the culture of the sciences.

It is particularly worthy of observation, that it was about this period that the wise and salutary law, which excludes ignorant and illiterate persons from the sacred functions of the Christian ministry, acquired that force which it retains. It has not unaptly been remarked, in reply to those who depreciate human learning, as referring to religion, that literature is the key by which we often open the treasures of learning, human and divine. Thus, by cultivating it, the methods of teaching theology at this time were greatly

improved, and the genius and spirit of the Christian religion better explained, and more pleasingly enforced.

Nor were the civilizing effects of the reformation less conspicuous: it greatly contributed to soften and to ameliorate the manners of many nations, who, before that period, were sunk in stupidity, rude and unsocial. The disputes which arose on the important subject, had a great tendency to eradicate from the minds of men that ferocity which had so long been favoured, and even nourished by the barbarous suggestions of a debasing superstition. It is also certain, that from the very dawn of this happy revolution in Christianity, and even before its salutary influences were manifested to their extent, pure religion had many sincere and fervent votaries, though they were much concealed from public view by the multitudes of fanatics which surrounded them. Many attempts were made by persons of eminent piety to restore the institutions of public worship to their primitive simplicity, but the effort was for the present premature, and therefore vain. A multitude of useless and frivolous ceremonies yet remained; nor did the pontiffs, of course, think it expedient to diminish aught of that pomp and show that gave the ministers of religion so great an influence over the multitude.

Many monastic orders were instituted in this age, amongst the principal of which we must rank that of the Jesuits.* Many were also reformed.

* The Jesuits hold a middle rank, between the monks and the secular clerks, and, with regard to the nature of their institute, approach nearer to the regular canons than any

other order; for though they resemble the monks in living separate from the multitude, and are bound by certain religious vows, yet are they exempt from stated hours of

We have thus given a general view of the state of religion and learning, and shall shortly remark

worship, and other similar services that attach to monastic orders, that they may have more time to employ in the education of youth, in directing the consciences of the faithful, and in the transactions of other things relating to the prosperity of the papal hierarchy. This order is divided into three classes: professed members, who reside in what are termed the professed houses; the scholars, who instruct the youth; and novices, who live in the houses of probation. The first class, besides the usual monastic vows, solemnly engage to go, without deliberation or delay, wherever the pope shall think fit to send them. The scholars are possessed of large revenues, and in case of urgent necessity are obliged to contribute to the support of the professed members. These latter, who are comparatively few in number, are, generally speaking, men of prudence and learning, deeply skilled in the human heart, and dexterous in transacting worldly affairs, from their natural penetration and sagacity, improved by experience. It is well known, that they conducted almost universally the education of youth, hence the springs of human conduct became apparent to them, and they were enabled to direct the passions and the

principles of those among whom they mingled.

The most accurate division of labour was observed in the allotment of their various employments. Their candidates, who by a refinement of ecclesiastical policy, after an unusually long probation, were bound by laws, that deprived them of liberty, yet left a discretionary power of ejection in the order, were incessantly watched by the penetrating eye of the master of novices; a minute description of their character and peculiar talent was forwarded to the superiors: at the end of the noviciate they were employed to the advantage of the community, the natural bent of the individual being accurately marked, and never suffered to be diverted by a multiplicity of employments, but solely devoted to that for which his mind had a bias, to favour and cultivate which, no trouble nor expense was spared. The secrets of the society were not revealed, even to all the professed members; it was only a small number of this class, whom old age had enriched with experience, and long trial declared worthy of such important trust, that were instructed in the mysteries of the order.

The church and court of Rome, since the remarkable period when so many king-

the influence of the causes suggested, as more immediately referring to Ireland, where it will be

doms withdrew from their jurisdiction, derived more influence and support from the labours of this order, than from all their other emissaries and ministers; for by the gentle and complying spirit that marked their demeanour, by their consummate skill and prudence in civil affairs, by their general and extended knowledge and accomplishments, they insinuated themselves into the peculiar favour and protection of the great; nor did any thing tend more to give them that ascendancy they universally acquired, than the dexterity with which they relaxed and modified their system of morality, accommodating it artfully to the propensities of those they desired to govern, and depriving it on certain occasions of that severity which rendered it troublesome and irksome to the sensual and voluptuous, although as far as referred to their individual conduct, whatever might be their political delinquencies, they were not chargeable with moral irregularities, the internal police of their institute precluding the possibility of gross misconduct.

By the qualities and influence we have named, the members of this order supplanted in the palaces of the great those who had previously directed the consciences of princes, particularly the Do-

minicans. Indeed, it may be truly said in regard to this order, that "knowledge is power." That their ascendancy was injurious to the cause of virtue has been alleged, and it is to be feared not without reason. That the members of it employed all the force of their subtle distinctions, to sap the foundations of morality, and opened a door to all sorts of licentiousness and iniquity, by the relaxed and dissolute maxims of conduct they propagated, as far as their influence extended, appears too evident from those very maxims so indulgently favourable to the depraved propensities of man. The two following points of doctrine are amongst many, to prove the justness of the assertion as to their pernicious influence. They represented it as a matter of perfect indifference, from what motive men obey the laws of God, provided those laws are really obeyed; and maintain that those who obey from the fear of punishment are as agreeable to the Deity, as those actions which proceed from a love of Him and his laws. Thus they made the Almighty a vindictive tyrant, rejoicing in the trembling, dread, and terror of his creatures. They maintained further, that a man never sins, properly speaking, but when he transgresses a divine law which is fully known to him,

found that the attachment to Rome was very strong, as were likewise the causes which prevented that mental emancipation so conspicuous in the nations of Europe at this period.

and which is *present to his mind when he acts*, and of which he understands the true meaning and intent; and they concluded from thence, that in strict justice the conduct of that transgressor cannot be looked upon as criminal, who is either ignorant of the law, or is in *doubt* about its true meaning, or *loses sight of it through forgetfulness* at the time he violates it.

We have spoken in the past tense of the Jesuits, and their doctrines; but we shall do well to remember, that after having for a long period been universally suppressed from the experience of its dangerous influence, this order is *again revived*, that it is permitted to send its congregations into the *very centre of our island*;

that in Ireland it has extensive institutions, daily increasing in riches and influence. We pretend not to question the policy of this measure, but the friends of religious liberty cannot but weigh the indulgence, since popery is certainly not a system of innocent speculative opinions, but a heavy yoke of mental and civil despotism, tending to enslave the consciences, to debase the principles, and to destroy the most sacred rights of men. Of course, we speak as to its general effect on the mass, that there are innumerable instances of individuals rising superior to its vitiating power, is readily acknowledged; but these must be among the *thinking* class, comparatively few in a community.

CHAPTER XI

Accession of Henry the eighth—Kildare continues in administration—His sudden death produces commotion—His son Gerald elected—Is obliged to take the field—Hatred of Wolsey towards him—Duke of Norfolk created Lord Lieutenant—Vigorous administration of the Duke—Earl of Ormond succeeds him—Kildare resumes his government—His proceedings on the death of Wolsey—Alan, archbishop of Dublin—Kildare receives the royal mandate to repair to the presence—Leaves the government to his son Thomas—Rash conduct of the young governor—Result of the rebellion is the ruin of Kildare—Dawning of the reformation—Henry desires to extend the Reformation to Ireland—George Browne employed—Is advanced to the see of Dublin—Ireland is considered as a fief of the pope—Prepossession in favour of the ancient establishments—The people refuse to acknowledge Henry's supremacy—Browne's life exposed to danger—King declared supreme head of the church in Ireland—Authority of the Bishop of Rome renounced—Refusal of the oath of supremacy declared high treason. Intrigues of the Romish party—Conduct of Lord Grey—Difficult situation of archbishop Browne—Emissaries sent to Rome—The intrigues of the Romanists—Letter of Bishop of Metz to the chieftain O'Nial—Confederacy formed for the suppression of heresy.—O'Nial acknowledged lord and leader of the Northern Irish—His hostile proceedings—Lord Deputy disperses the insurgents—Lord Grey recalled to England—He suffers—The Irish are defeated by Sir William Brereton—Sir Anthony St. Leger assumes the government—Title of Lord of Ireland changed for that of King of Ireland—Parliament assembled to confer the new title on Henry—Conciliatory measures of the king—O'Nial visits the English court—His concessions—Is created a peer of the realm by the title of Earl of Tirowen—Progress of reformation—Irish forces attend Henry to Calais—Invasions of ecclesiastical privileges—A military force sent to Ireland—Bellingham made governor—Assiduity of the Romanists—Bellingham's conduct towards the Earl of Desmond—Anecdote—Barbarous zeal of Somerset—Liturgy to be introduced into Ireland—Neglect of moral improvement

in Ireland—Pernicious consequences—Proclamation transmitted enjoining the acceptance of the new liturgy—It is opposed—Proceedings of the clergy—Dowdal archbishop of Armagh and his clergy—Sir James Crofts supersedes St. Leger in the government—Writes a conciliatory letter to Dowdal—Desires a conference—Interview—Superiority of the primacy changed from Armagh to Dublin—John Ball, his conduct—In what injudicious—Earl of Tirowen's ambition—Domestic dissensions in his family—Death of Edward the sixth has a powerful effect on the ecclesiastical system—Accession of Mary—Her proceedings respecting Ireland—Kildare's family restored—Sir Anthony St. Leger governor—Fitzwalter—A papal bull recited—State of religious feeling—Paul the fourth—His policy—Personal sketch of Archbishop Browne—Extract from a sermon of his.

HENRY the eighth ascended the throne in all the pride of popular favour. (1509.) In the vigour of youth, lively, animated, spirited, active, and well informed, he soon became the idol of his subjects. In the midst of the magnificence, pleasure, and dissipation of his court, and the plans of glory and ambition in foreign countries, Henry had little leisure to attend to the affairs of Ireland; and it was not until a long series of useless expeditions had somewhat subdued his passion for military glory, that he directed his attention to that part of his dominions, where indeed he might do much good, but in which there was nothing to contribute to his vanity, or to favour his love of ostentation. Ireland had been therefore left to the guidance of those ministers who had been appointed by Henry the seventh. Kildare continued his administration with vigour till his sudden death threw things again into commotion. The council and nobles elected Gerald his son to be lord deputy, which nomination was subsequently approved and confirmed in England. Gerald inherited the spirit of his father, and his name served to check the outrages which had

succeeded the decease of Kildare. He visited England on his return, convened a parliament, receiving a formal confirmation of the honours, privileges and possessions enjoyed by his ancestors. From the senate, the young Lord Deputy was summoned to the field. The superstitious Irish had been persuaded by some prophecy that the present time was appointed by providence for the restoration of their ancient power and splendour, and with this ignorant prepossession they grew violent and tumultuous. They rose in arms even in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and by the vigour of Kildare suffered their due punishment, he vigorously spread the terror of his arms, and enforced the authority of government.

This successful opening of his administration was too soon clouded by those family feuds which had so long rent the kingdom, and divided into malignant and violent factions. The success of Kildare aroused the evil passions of envy, hatred and revenge in his enemies, and his pride and inexperience gave them too great an advantage over him. They succeeded in having him removed from the government and detained in England upon various frivolous pretences. Wolsey had conceived a strong prejudice against Kildare because he had not received from him that obsequious attention to which he was accustomed from all. When, therefore, Henry's foreign affairs were somewhat settled, Wolsey suggested to him the impropriety of suffering his government of Ireland to be committed to any person of Irish race, and certainly with justice, (though his actuating motive was unworthy,) represented that the administration would be far more properly intrusted to an upright statesman unconnected with the factions and intrigues of the country he was to govern. The suggestion was of course ap-

proved by Henry, and Thomas, Earl of Surrey, son to him who had conquered at Flowden and been rewarded with the dukedom of Norfolk, was created lord lieutenant of Ireland, and sent to his government with one hundred guards and a thousand forces of inferior rank. Kildare was pronounced clear of every disloyal imputation, but did not return to Ireland, he attended the king to Calais, where he contributed to the parade and splendour of that memorable interview which took place between Henry and the French monarch. In the meantime, Surrey proceeded in a vigorous administration of his government, which was almost one continued course of military service, except a short interval of holding a parliament. He succeeded in reconciling contending lords, and in repelling insurgents, but the detail is possessed of too little interest, and is too little connected with our retrospect to render it necessary to dwell upon the particulars. On the removal of Surrey, Pierce Earl of Ormond succeeded him to the prejudice of Kildare, but the latter subsequently succeeded in resuming his government, yet was again nearly involved in disgrace by the ambition of his kinsman Desmond, whose cause he was supposed to favour to the injury of the king's interests.

When the intelligence of the disgrace and death of Wolsey was brought into Ireland, Kildare received it with the utmost joy, as such a powerful enemy removed, he could pursue his ambitious plans without reserve, and in order if possible to ensure to himself the full power, he contrived to have Alan, archbishop of Dublin, and a favourite of the deceased cardinal deprived of his office of chancellor, and the seals committed to Cromer, primate of Armagh, who was devoted to his interests.

In the march of mind which as we have seen had been so rapidly progressive, the science of government and politics had for some time become an interesting subject of disquisition, and indeed one of the first studies on the revival of letters. Hence, those Englishmen who had left their native country, and by being officially employed, had acquired some interest in Ireland, soon found a pleasure as well as a necessity in pursuing these subjects of speculation, and it naturally followed that the more acute and penetrating were led by the disorders continually before their view, to trace minutely the rise and progress of English power in an island so distracted, the exciting causes of disorder, the sources of civil prosperity, and the correction of public evils. Many evidences yet remain in repositories of curious papers, that such disquisitions occupied several writers of that period resident in Ireland. Such men looking with sagacity to the result of present measures, observed with suspicion the growing power and aspiring ambition of Kildare. They considered the disorders of the realm minutely, and unanimously resolved to lay them before the throne. Alan, the deprived archbishop of Dublin and chancellor, took the lead in these secret consultations. He had been trained in the school of political intrigue by his patron Wolsey. This prelate had been educated at Oxford, removed thence to Cambridge, where he took the degree of bachelor of laws. He was sent by Wareham, archbishop of Canterbury to the pope respecting certain matters relating to the church. He continued at the Romish court nine years, and was created doctor of laws. After his return he was appointed chaplain to Wolsey, and was nominated commissary or judge of his legantine court,

as legate *a latere*,* the duties of which he executed with an assiduity and attention neither upright nor honourable. Though accused of misdeemeanor and dismissed from the office, he was still protected by the cardinal, and proved a useful and active agent to him in his favourite scheme of suppressing the monasteries, of which forty of the smaller ones he first visited, and subsequently suppressed for the erection of his colleges at Oxford and Ipswich. Wolsey procured for this his favourite chaplain the living of Dalby in Leicestershire, though it belonged to the master and brethren of the hospital at Barton Lazars. About the latter end of 1525 he was incorporated doctor of laws in the University of Oxford. March 1528 he was consecrated archbishop of Dublin, and about the same time was made chancellor of Ireland. The jealousy which Gardiner conceived of this favourite is said to have been the occasion of his removal into Ireland, where he of course adopted the prejudices of his patron against the Geraldines. In the present instance, himself and his colleagues were as much actuated by pique and animosity as by a regard to the public welfare in the measure they were concerting. The

* Legates *a latere* were a kind of Legates who possessed the full powers of the popes in all the provinces committed to their charge, and were very active in extending as well as exercising it. They nominated to all vacant benefices, assembled synods, and were studious to maintain all ecclesiastical privileges which never could be fully protected without encroachment on the civil power. If there was any want

of concurrence or opposition, it was always expected that the civil power must give way. Every deed which had the least pretence of holding any thing spiritual, was brought into the spiritual court; and could not be canvassed before a civil court. These were the established laws of the church, and where a legate was sent immediately from Rome, he was sure to maintain the papal claims with the utmost vigour.

application was too well supported to be received with indifference by Henry, and his violence of temper readily affixed to Kildare offences, of which he was in reality innocent. He received the royal mandate to commit the government to a responsible person, and to repair to the presence without delay. The earl, conscious that his conduct would not bear strict inquisition, endeavoured to evade the order, but Henry was inflexible, and he had no course left but to obey, and he took the impolitic and dangerous step of entrusting the government to his son Thomas, a youth scarcely arrived at his majority,

Great personal beauty rendered the young governor generally attractive, nor were the rashness of youth and the violence of temper which he displayed, combined with an excess of family pride, regarded severely, although they exposed him to the artifice of his enemies, and the adulation of his pretended friends. His father, it was rumoured, had been committed to the Tower, and the enemies of his family easily spread abroad subsequent reports of his execution, and the threatened royal vengeance against the whole of his family. Lord Thomas, in consequence of letters to him being intercepted, became confirmed in his belief, that his father had been put to death. He consulted with his Irish associates, who further irritated his inflamed spirit by advising him to revenge the injuries of his family, and promised him assistance. The too credulous Thomas listened to their passionate arguments, and plunged into a desperate rebellion ere he gave himself time to think upon the fatal results which might follow.

Attended by his troop, he rushed tumultuously into the council assembled in St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin. The Lords were naturally alarmed, he desired them not to be so, declaring his intention

to act with the open generosity of a soldier. He resigned his sword of state, determined he said to depend on his own weapon. He warned them to avoid him as an enemy, for that he was no longer the deputy of King Henry, but his mortal foe. The lords were confounded and astonished at the daring courage of the youthful warrior and avenger. Cromer the primate and chancellor appears at this moment of interest in that amiable point of view which endears to us a religion of peace, and confers veneration on its ministers. He with dignified composure took the young Kildare by the hand, and mildly requested to be heard a few words. He then pathetically represented the rashness, weakness, and iniquity of his present attempt, grounded on an uncertain rumour, and if assured, unwarrantable, the ruin in which it would involve his family, the misery it would spread through his country, and the guilt into which it would plunge his own soul. He besought him to consider the duty he owed to himself, to his family, to his country, to his king, and above all to his God, and to desist from his purpose. His speech delivered with the animation of genuine feeling, and the emotion of sincerity, was interpreted by the rude Irish followers of Lord Thomas according to their own ideas, for they understood not the language of the speaker. They conceived that the venerable man was encouraging the enterprise of their young leader, and one of their native bands who attended in the train, unwilling to be outdone in what he believed his own profession, instantly began to chaunt the praises of young Thomas, the gallant *silken* lord as he stiled him, (from the richness of his dress, &c.) extolling his greatness and valour, chiding his delay and calling him to the field. Unhappily the effusions of the rhapsodist prevailed over

the sage counsels of the venerable prelate. The young Kildare rushed forth at the head of his Irish train, bent on revenge for the blood of his father, and a formidable insurrection quickly ensued. The devastation of the district called Fingal, the granary of Dublin, obliged the citizens to make some effort to oppose the insurgents. Lord Thomas appeared before the gates of the city threatening to destroy with fire and sword unless his men were permitted without molestation to lay siege to the castle. Kildare was doubtless apprised that to this place his known enemy, Alan, the archbishop and other lords and officers of state had fled for safety. Alan reflecting that he was certainly obnoxious to the rebels, determined without waiting the precarious event of war, to seek refuge in England. A vessel was secretly provided, and he embarked, but whether by the perfidy or unskilfulness of the pilot, who was a Fitzgerald, the ship was stranded near Clontarf, and Alan soon discovered by his enemies in the adjacent village. He was dragged from his bed with barbarous triumph, and led naked as he was to their captain. The prelate fell on his knees before him, imploring mercy for a Christian and a churchman. The young lord without deigning to reply, turned his horse, exclaiming in the Irish language, "Away with the churl!" His caitiffs interpreting the expression according to their own malignant ideas, while the wretched suppliant yet lifted up his hands for mercy, assailed and literally hewed him to pieces. The place where this barbarous murder was committed, was afterwards hedged in, and unfrequented in horror and detestation of the act. Thus ended in the fifty-eighth year of his age, the earthly career of one of those deep sacerdotal politicians, with which the courts of princes then

abounded. The final result of this desperate rebellion was the utter ruin of Kildare and his family, even those individuals who had entirely disapproved it. The rash Kildare on being sent to the Tower, discovered that his father, whose supposed death he had been avenging, had lived to learn the rebellion of his son, and had sunk under the severe mental anguish which the intelligence had occasioned. A younger brother of Kildare, a youth about twelve years of age, though pursued by the vengeance of the king, was saved by the generous stratagem of his aunt. The various fortunes of this noble youth were highly interesting, and he was wonderfully preserved to regain the honours of his family.

While these events were passing in Ireland, Europe beheld the glorious dawning of the reformation. We have seen that the manifold and increasing evils of the Romish church had gradually prepared the minds of men for a great religious revolution, and a concurrence of incidents contributed to the crisis to which we are arrived. Both the heads and the hearts of nations were in a state of preparation for the reception of a purer doctrine than had filled the European world. Amongst the principal of these concurring causes, we may certainly rank that bold invention of Leo the tenth, which he justly styled a very profitable trade, viz. the sale of indulgences, and by which fraud and injustice became honourable when it contributed to the riches of the see, and the glory of the papacy, while they aggravated the passions of men, and lulled most effectually their consciences by inspitng them with a confidence in their meritorious sacrifices. The licentious and depraved lives of the individuals who retailed this papal stock of merits, could not fail to strike the view even of the most superficial and the most bigoted,

and prepared them readily for the exposition of the abuses, when the fearless spirit of Luther burst forth to inform the credulous multitude, as he gradually proceeded to attack the various errors which had obscured the lustre of religion. After deep reflection, he had undauntedly entered the lists against the hierarchy, and boldly striking at the foundation of the pernicious system which had so long prevailed, he taught his disciples to renounce all human authority, to resort to the word of God, as the only true standard of Christian faith and duty. His doctrines were embraced with ardour, propagated with zeal, and a deadly wound was given to the papal power, ere it well had time to consider its danger.*

All Europe in a little time resounded with the name of the daring innovator, and men, roused from the lethal slumber which had so long pressed upon their faculties, began to *think*, and to call in question the most ancient and received opinions. The rumour of these innovations soon reached England, which having tasted the bitterness of clerical usurpation, was not unprepared for the new doctrine, bearing, as it did, a resemblance to that of the Lollards. It gained, therefore, many partisans among all ranks and conditions. A minute detail of the progress of this mental revolution seems unnecessary here, as the circumstances are so familiar to the reader of English history. It is only necessary to say, that the passions of Henry were made the secondary means of effecting the great work, and that a way was opened for restraining the enormities of popular superstition, and communicating the Scriptures to the laity in the vulgar tongue.

* Leo X. was a lover and patroniser of the arts, magnificent and voluptuous in his habits.

While the imperious Henry was elated at the general and ready compliance of his people with his scheme of reformation in England, he naturally desired to extend it yet further, by gaining a reception for the new doctrines in Ireland, and he fixed upon a fit instrument to effect his purpose ; George Browne, provincial of the friars of St. Augustine, was eminent in London for sincerity and simplicity of conduct, for charity and benevolence, as well as a freedom and liberality of religious sentiment. He frequently preached against the futility of pilgrimages and penances, dissuaded his hearers from a vain dependence on the merits and intercession of departed saints, exhorting them to rely solely on the mediation of our Lord, and to address their prayers immediately to God.

Lord Cromwell, who on the death of Wolsey had become the king's favourite, and exercised all the rights annexed to his supremacy, under the title of Vicar-General of England, easily procured the zealous preacher of such doctrines to be promoted in Ireland. Cromwell had favoured the cause of the reformers secretly, and as he possessed prudence and ability, he was able, from his responsible station, very effectually, though covertly, to promote the new doctrines. On the death of the unhappy Archbishop Alan, the Augustine provincial, Browne, was advanced to the see of Dublin, and with commissioners, was appointed to confer with the clergy and nobility, and to procure a general acknowledgment of the king's supremacy. This, however, was found a more difficult task than had been anticipated by the impetuous Henry and his politic minister, who very erroneously imagined a people, whom they regarded with feelings at least bordering on contempt, would be easily led to imitate the ex-

ample of those of England, and would not dare presume to question the monarch's will.

The spirit of religious disquisition had in a degree been introduced into Ireland, with the constant succession of English settlers—indeed, to such an extent as to cause the revival of a law, during the parliament of the tenth year of Henry VII., to prevent the growth of the Lollard heresy. But Ireland was an ungenial soil for the seeds of the reformation; nor was it a place in which the causes which had produced it in other countries, could find a field of operation. Unconnected in polity, strangers to the advantages of national union, ever engaged in petty contests, a prey to perpetual jealousies, and even the most civilised living in continual alarm, and obliged to hold themselves ready to repel some foe—they had little leisure or inclination to employ themselves in speculation, and were naturally destitute of that disposition which would lead to inquiries that had been pursued with such earnestness and avidity in other countries, inquiries which had burst the bonds of mental thralldom, and were tending to make men “free indeed.” The people had, it is true, most severely experienced the oppression of the clergy, but that which in other countries seemed the capital and almost universal grievance, was but one, and perhaps the lesser of the many that weighed upon Ireland. Thus when almost all Europe had declared against the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny, a slight attempt made in one province of Ireland, [1529,] to circumscribe the privileges of the clergy, raised a most violent and insolent clamour against the order, although it amounted to nothing more than empowering the civil magistrate to imprison ecclesiastical debtors. Now was the period to prove the pernicious policy of excluding any part of the

population of Ireland from the privilege of forming one body of British subjects; for among the evil consequences of excluding the old natives from the pale of English laws, dark superstition and blind bigotry proved the natural concomitants of a disquieted, ignorant, uncivilised, and dissolute mode of life. From the impolitic and absurd distinction of inhabitants, naturally resulted great irregularities in the ecclesiastical constitution of the nation, which had a direct tendency to confirm the people in the grossest ignorance, and, of consequence; in the most abject superstition. In those dioceses where law and civility were most prevalent, the prelates found it impossible to extend their pastoral care or jurisdiction to those districts occupied by the old natives. Their synods were held, (as the records express it,) *inter Anglicos*; and the Irish clergy, hating the English power, when summoned to obey their ordinary, were refractory and contumacious, and were excluded from the assemblies where they claimed a right to be present as assessors and coadjutors, a refusal which kept alive prejudice, and fostered hatred.

In the districts more remote from the seat of government, where war and confusion generally reigned, the appointment of prelates and pastors was frequently altogether neglected. It cannot be surprising, that bishops intruding surreptitiously, or seizing the sees by violence, both which sometimes occurred, should be little sought, revered, or obeyed. They sometimes only enjoyed an empty title, sometimes were driven by the prevailing public disorders to the discharge of some inferior pastoral function, in places of security and seclusion. Prelates of the more eminent dioceses reposed in monastic indolence and tranquillity, while all Europe was engaged

of the tumult of theological dispute; as a proof of which, we find an Irish bishop renowned among his countrymen for the composition of a hymn in barbarous Latin rhymes, in praise of a St. Macartin, while his brethren in other countries were engaged in discussion on the most important points of religion.

A clergy without knowledge or discipline, and a laity destitute of instruction, were, in proportion to their ignorance, abjectly attached to papal authority, the only authority which they had been habituated to reverence. It was perfectly natural that they should now with astonishment and horror hear it impeached, and be peremptorily required to throw it off: There was one peculiar prejudice in favour of the see of Rome, which operated equally on the Irish and the English, and even on the more enlightened of the latter. Ireland had been for ages considered, and always industriously represented as a fief of the pope, in right of the church of St. Peter. By virtue of this imaginary right, the seignory of the kingdom, it is known, was granted to Henry II. The Irish parliament had, from time to time, acknowledged this to be the only legitimate foundation of the authority of the crown of England. It was therefore considered more especially profane and wicked to deny the authority of the pope, even in his own rightful inheritance, and that a prince entrusted with this inheritance, for the furtherance and protection of religion, should disclaim his spiritual father and sovereign, and impiously violate the stipulations of his ancestors, by which alone he was entitled to any authority or pre-eminence in Ireland. With this general prepossession in favour of the ancient establishments, the people expressed their opinions with little

restraint, removed as they were from the immediate effects of Henry's inflexible severity. Hence, when the commissioners appointed, explained their instructions, and demanded an acknowledgment of the king's supremacy, Cromer, primate of Armagh, English by birth, and who had some time held the office of chancellor, openly and boldly declared against an attempt so odious, and a presumption so haughty. He summoned the suffragans and clergy of his province, and pathetically represented the danger threatened to the religion of their ancestors, exhorting them vehemently to adhere inviolably to the apostolic chair, suiting his arguments to the range of their understandings. He reminded them, that their country had, from the earliest ages, been called the Holy Island, a convincing proof that it ever was, and is the peculiar property of the holy see, from which the monarchs of England derive their lordship. He further enjoined them, by his spiritual authority, to resist all innovation, as they hoped for everlasting felicity, and pronounced a tremendous curse on all those who should sacrilegiously acknowledge the king's supremacy. In the meantime, he dispatched two emissaries to Rome, to represent the danger of the church, and to entreat the interposition of the pontiff in defence of his own rights and interests in Ireland. It may readily be supposed, that this spirited and zealous conduct of one of the most eminent of the Irish prelates created a great sensation, and enlivened the opposition of the friends of Rome, against the innovation of her discipline.

To the utter mortification of the English agents, the king's commission was treated with indifference and neglect, and his vicar, on account of the inferiority of his birth, became even a subject

of popular ridicule.* Archbishop Browne, with the assistance of some of his suffragans, laboured in support of the commission, but he was treated not only with disdain but outrage, his life being even exposed to danger. This, however, cannot be subject of surprise, when we recollect the injudicious means resorted to of effecting the proposed reformation. It was not the prostrating images, the destroying relics, the abolishing absurd and idolatrous rites, which could impart any salutary influence to the minds, or break the strong bonds of fanaticism which bound a people totally unprepared, either by mental cultivation, or the peculiarities of polity and situation, for the reception of doctrines so diametrically opposite to those which had grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength. And such, perhaps, was the opinion of Browne himself, although the violent means he used were those which marked the spirit of the times. He informed Lord Cromwell of his ill success, and represented in their true light the melancholy state of Irish ecclesiastical affairs; as well as the extreme ignorance of the clergy, incapable of performing even the common offices of their function, and utter strangers even to the language in which they celebrated their mass. He depicted the furious and obstinate zeal of the people, whose blind attachment to Rome, he said, was as determined as the constancy of the most enlightened martyrs to true religion. He added, that they exulted in expectation of effectual support from the pope, and seemed confident that his holiness would engage some of the old Irish chieftains, and parti-

* Browne, in a letter to Cromwell, tells him, with a simplicity characterising the age: "The country folk here

much hate your lordship, and despitefully call you in their Irish tongue, the blacksmith's son."

cularly O'Nial, the great dynast of the north, to rise in defence of religion. Considering all these circumstances, the archbishop earnestly recommended, as the most effectual method of procedure, that an Irish parliament should be assembled without delay, which, like the English legislature, might by law enforce a general acknowledgment of the king's supremacy, so as to terrify the refractory, and silence their opposition.

This advice was approved, and a parliament was convened at Dublin, May 1536. The transactions of a late parliament at Westminster, sufficiently intimated to the Irish what acts would be most acceptable to the king, and it was accordingly made the model of their present ordinances. Left to the direction of their own loyal zeal, (the act of transmission having been waived,) they proceeded not only to provide for the internal regulation and local necessities of the pale, but to decide on points equally pertaining to the realm of England, and to the land of Ireland, as they express it, appending and belonging to the imperial crown of that realm, and to the *unity, peace,* and *wealth* of both lands. With respect to the reformation, the king was declared supreme head on earth of the church in Ireland, all appeals to Rome in spiritual causes were taken away, the English laws against slandering the king, in consequence of these innovations, were enacted and confirmed in Ireland, together with the provisions made in England for the payment of first-fruits to the king; by another act he was invested not only with the first-fruits of bishoprics, and other secular promotions in the church of Ireland, but also with those of abbies, priories, colleges, and hospitals; by another, the authority of the Bishop of Rome was more solemnly renounced, and the maintainers of it in Ireland made subject

to premunire. All officers of every kind and degree were directed to take the oath of supremacy, and every person who should refuse it, declared as in England to be guilty of high treason. All payment of pensions, and suing for dispensations and faculties to Rome were utterly prohibited, by adopting the law made for this purpose in England, and accommodating it to Ireland. By one act, twelve religious houses were suppressed, the priory of St. Wolstan's in particular, and the demesnes of all vested for ever in the crown. It cannot be necessary to remark on the slavish submission of the parliaments of this period, nor to dwell upon this Irish echo to the English subservient one. All the laws which it enacted were received without opposition, except those relative to ecclesiastical jurisdiction; these had all the violence of bigotry to encounter. The Romish party, prepared for the agitation of a subject so important, had collected all their adherents, and were ready for a vigorous contention. Two proctors from each diocese, who had usually been summoned to parliament, composed a formidable body of ecclesiastics, avowed adherents to the holy see. They claimed to be a part of the legislative body, and to have a full right of suffrage in every public question; it therefore became necessary, before the act of supremacy could be proposed, to define their rights. It was declared by a previous act that their claim was groundless and presumptuous; that they were summoned merely as assistants and counsellors, and that from the first day of the present parliament, they should be accepted and taken as counsellors and assistants only, whose consent and concurrence was by no means necessary to any parliamentary transaction. Although the partizans of Rome were thus unexpectedly de-

prived of the suffrages of so powerful a body, still when the act of supremacy came to be proposed, both lords and commons united in expressing their unqualified abhorrence of the spiritual authority assumed by the king, while the royal party were equally determined in defence of it. Archbishop Browne took a prominent part in supporting the propriety of the act, using such arguments which it is fair to suppose had weight upon his own judgment, and which were, in fact, more likely to influence his auditors, than those of greater solidity and real force. He pleaded the authority of the pontiffs themselves against the usurpations of Rome; he observed, that they had acknowledged emperors, kings, and princes to be supreme in their own dominions, and even Christ's own vicars. He therefore declared that he freely and conscientiously accepted the king's highness as supreme in both realms, in ecclesiastical as well as in civil affairs. He concluded his arguments with one calculated to work upon the fears of his hearers, pronouncing those who made any difficulty in concurring with him to have no right to be considered or treated as loyal subjects. Apprehension softened the violence of those who failed to be persuaded, and the friends of Rome were compelled to reserve themselves for a clandestine opposition to the execution of a law which they possessed no power to prevent being enacted, but which, in despite of legislative authority, they determined to oppose with indefatigable zeal.

With an ingenuity and craft, (machinery, with the motions of which they were well acquainted,) they devised a pretence for impeaching the authority of the parliament, and persuading the people that the laws enacted in the first session were utterly invalid. But the zeal of these ob-

jectors was so precipitate, that they defeated their purposes, for by advancing their objections during the prorogations of the parliament, instead of waiting for its dissolution, they gave it an opportunity, in the latter session, to explain the supposed ambiguity upon which they had grounded the invalidity of its enactments, and to declare the validity of all acts of the present parliament, denouncing those guilty of felony who should attempt to invalidate any of its laws. To these legislative measures, it was at this time also necessary to add extraordinary vigilance and activity in the field.

It was naturally to be expected, that religious controversy must greatly aggravate the disorders which had so long pervaded the country, that such controversies would have a tendency to separate those who had heretofore been united; the king's subjects who disapproved the recent regulations, were in danger of being seduced from their allegiance, while at the same time a new bond of union seemed formed among the old Irish. Their temporal interests were indeed separate, and their enmities deep and rancorous, but the defence of the ancient religion was regarded as a common cause, in which they were bound to unite, while it furnished a fair plea for insurrection. The chief governor, Lord Leonard Grey, was aware of these consequences, and was not inattentive to prevent them if possible. He traversed the country, and obtained from the chieftains formal indentures of peace and submission, receiving hostages as a security of their fidelity. But the faithful services of Lord Grey could not preserve him from that popular odium which his vigilant, envious, and powerful enemies found various occasions of exciting and inflaming. The friends of Rome, in particular, had an implacable

resentment towards him, from his zeal in removing and destroying the instruments of superstition, as the demolition of the churches was termed. His government was perpetually subjected to new inquietudes from religious controversy. [1536.] Archbishop Browne, the master spirit and principal agent in Irish reformation, found the utmost difficulty, even in the very seat of government, to counteract the insidious and secret intrigues of Cromer and his party. The clergy of his cathedrals resolutely opposed his attempt to remove their images and reliques, and sent a special emissary to Rome, to express their devotion to the holy father, and to implore his interposition in the support of his authority in the holy island.

Adrian VI.* now occupied the papal chair, as successor to Leo X. His character and purity of manners were very superior to those who had preceded him ; and while he candidly acknowledged the abuses of the court of Rome, he appears sincerely desirous to effect a reform. It is related of him, as a proof of his frankness, (for which he was, of course, much blamed by papal supporters,) that he maintained, *a pope might err*, even in a matter of faith. Still he was a warm anti-Lutheran ; hence in his brieve against this reformer and his doctrines, he deals out his threatenings in language as haughty as any used by his less candid predecessors. It will, therefore, be readily supposed that the Irish emissaries were well received at the court of Rome, and that Cromer and his associates were enjoined to persevere, boldly in support of the papal authority. They were fully empowered to absolve those

* Preceptor to Charles V. ; hated by the Romans, because a stranger. At his death, a placard was found on his physician's door, "*To the deliverer of his country.*"

from their oath who had been persuaded to acknowledge the king's supremacy, and were directed to command them, under the penalty of the severest ecclesiastical censures, to make confession of their guilt within forty days, and to enter into a new engagement, composed with great solemnity, to maintain the authority of the holy see, to oppose heretics, to resist all edicts issued against the church of Rome; and to declare those accursed who should hold any power, either ecclesiastical or civil, superior to that of the mother church.

Thus was religious controversy, and all the multiplied bitter feelings of contending opinions, added to the evils which pervaded unhappy Ireland. Several of the incumbents in the diocese of Dublin resigned their benefices rather than acknowledge the supremacy of Henry; and so considerable was the opposing party, that the zealous Browne would not even venture to fill up these benefices until he had consulted his patron Cromwell. In his letters he expresses in very strong terms his apprehensions of the agents from Rome, and their powerful influence: "Ever since the first settlement of the English in Ireland," he remarks, "the old natives have been desirous of some foreign power to support and govern them, and now both English and Irish sacrifice their private animosities to the general cause of religion, and seem on the point of forming a dangerous confederacy, which some foreigner may be soon invited to lead against the English government." Nor were these fears groundless, as far as referred to the activity and influence of Romish agents; for while Cromer employed himself indefatigably in discharge of the pontifical commission, Romish agents were equally active in exciting the Irish chieftains of the north to as-

sume arms in defence of the ancient religion. A Franciscan friar employed in this agency was detected and seized in Dublin, his papers fully proving the intent and purpose of his commission. He was first exposed on a pillory, but on orders being received from Lord Cromwell to send him prisoner to England, the wretched man, terrified with apprehensions of what he was likely to suffer from the king's vengeance, put an end to his existence. Amongst his papers was the following letter of the Bishop of Metz, in the name of the council of cardinals, to O'Nial. We give it entire from the historian Leland, as a proof of the assiduity with which individuals were excited to unsheath the sword against the opposers of the pope, and of the art used to apply the argument to the peculiar prejudices and passions of the man addressed.

My son O'Nial,

Thou and thy fathers were ever faithful to the mother church of Rome. His holiness the present pope, and his council of holy fathers, have lately found an ancient prophecy of one Lazerianus, an Irish archbishop of Cashel. It saith, that the church of Rome shall surely fall when the Catholic faith is once overthrown in Ireland. Therefore, for the glory of the mother church, the honour of St. Peter, and your own security, suppress heresy, and oppose the enemies of his holiness. You see that when the Roman faith perisheth in Ireland, the see of Rome is fated to utter destruction; the council of cardinals have, therefore, thought it necessary to animate the people of the holy island in this pious cause, being assured, that while the mother church hath sons of such worth as you, and those who shall unite with you, she shall not fall, but prevail for

ever, in some degree at least, in Britain. Having thus obeyed the orders of the sacred council, we recommend your princely person to the protection of the Holy Trinity, of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Peter, St. Paul, and all the host of heaven. Amen.

The detection of the unhappy friar could be of little consequence in checking the activity of the Romish party, for he was but one of a host on the alert, well furnished with legends and prophecies, and similar agents of seduction, accommodated to the ignorance and the credulity of some, and the pride and vanity of others. The chieftain O'Nial, for instance, readily yielded to the flattering persuasion, that the defence of the holy church rested on his prowess, and eagerly embraced the fair occasion of resuming the ancient consequence of his family. Throughout the northern province, the clergy actively employed themselves in haranguing the fiery chieftains, raising their enthusiasm and zeal to the utmost height, by conjuring and commanding them to waive all individual contentions, and firmly to unite in the glorious cause of religion. The latent spark in the bosom of these chieftains was speedily ignited, and a powerful confederacy formed for the suppression of heresy, while the pride of O'Nial was further exalted by his being acknowledged lord and leader of the northern Irish.

1539. Such were the papal champions among the native Irish. O'Nial declared war against the invaders of papal rights, led his forces through the territory of Meath, denouncing the terrors of his princely vengeance against all the enemies of religion, committing in his course various excesses uncontrolled. But this vain-glorious zeal was productive of no fruits: without any concerted

scheme of effective hostilities, O'Nial seemed contented with the havoc he had made, and after reviewing his troops, he marched them back with the prey they had made in triumph to their own settlements.

The lord deputy had foreseen the storm; he obtained a reinforcement of troops from Cheshire, and uniting them with his own, hastened to repel the insurgents; the result was the dispersion of the Irish, who fled before the vigorous arms of the English with precipitation, taking refuge in their remote haunts. This victory of Bellahoc, which broke the power of the northern Irish, and struck terror into the boldest chieftains, closed the services of Lord Grey. He was recalled to England, where the machinations of his enemies prevailed. Various articles of impeachment were brought against him, and he was upon the most frivolous charges accused of high treason. Overcome by apprehensions of the king's rigour and severity, he failed to take steps to exonerate himself from the charges brought against him; he pleaded guilty to his indictment, and suffered.

The enemies of government, and the partisans of Rome were equally gratified by the fatal catastrophe of this unhappy nobleman, who had served a merciless master so faithfully. The event revived the courage of the chieftains, who once more resolved to unsheath their swords against heresy. But their ill-concerted plans were defeated by the prompt measures of Sir William Brereton, to whom the unfortunate Grey had committed the government on his departure for England. These repeated checks created a general despondency among the disaffected Irish, and the papal cause grew daily more desperate. Numerous monasteries and other religious houses were resigned to the king, and even the refractory

prior of Christchurch, Dublin, losing his hopes of deriving advantage from his secret practices with Rome, submitted to a change of his community into that of a dean and chapter. In short, a complete revolution of sentiment appeared to take place, and when Sir Anthony St. Leger assumed the government, the fairest presages of tranquillity seemed to attend the change: A regulation of good policy was made at this time, well calculated to suit the present pacific dispositions of the Irish, and to give weight to the English government. It was judiciously resolved to change the style of Lord of Ireland, hitherto borne by the English monarchs, to that of King, and when we reflect on the force with which names and titles operate on the multitude, we shall perceive the good policy of this change at this peculiar period. It was resolved in the English cabinet, that an Irish parliament should confer the title of King of Ireland upon Henry and his heirs.* A parliament was accordingly summoned without delay, and immediately enacted "that forasmuch as the king and his progenitors ever rightfully enjoyed all authority royal by the name of lords of Ireland, but for lack of the title of king had not been duly obeyed, his highness and his heirs for ever shall have the style and honour of King of Ireland, and that it shall be deemed high treason to impeach this title, or to oppose the royal authority." The act was announced with every demonstration of joy and

* Henry was fond of illustrious distinctions, and ambitious of fame of every kind. "We learn from the papal archives," says Milner, "that this prince, before his contest with the Saxon divine, had been soliciting the pope to be-

stow on him some honourable title similar to the Catholic or Most Christian King. It is even said that the title of Most Christian Majesty had been intended for Henry, but that the design was prevented by political considerations.

solemnity as an event highly interesting to the people, and honourable to the monarch. A general pardon, except for capital crimes, attended its promulgation, and after acknowledging the general satisfaction the measure produced, and the benefits likely to result, the document concludes, "And God save the King's Majesty, King Henry the eighth, king of England, Ireland, and France, defender of the faith, and on earth, supreme head of the church of England and Ireland."

Although we cannot attribute it solely to this measure, but doubtless to a concurrence of causes, it is certain, a general submission immediately ensued. Even the aspiring O'Nial made his peace by a full renunciation of the papal authority, and his example was universally followed. Great effect was produced by well timed graces shown to some loyal Irish and English subjects. Peerages and promotions were granted, and it was declared in parliament to be the king's intention to confer more. They who hoped to obtain, were of course anxious to deserve the promised distinctions, thus a spirit of emulation was excited which had the happiest effects. It grew fashionable to be loyal, and numbers actuated by various motives and various causes, were eager to receive law from the fountain of royalty. Amongst the laws enacted for the regulation of the new subjects, we find some tending to a gradual reformation of abuses in the church. It was ordained that bishops should be allowed to exercise their jurisdiction. That laymen and boys should not be admitted to ecclesiastical preferments. That tythes be duly paid, and no molestation be given to any ecclesiastical officers. The Earl of Ormond, the Earl of Desmond, and the Archbishop of Cashel were constituted guardians and executors of these and other ordinances of state.

It was also the judicious policy of the English government at this period to break if possible the dependencies of inferior chieftains and their septs, and thus gradually to introduce freedom and civility among the Irish districts. For this purpose they were encouraged to submit their complaints of whatever kind to the lord-deputy, to resort to his government as their certain resource, they were industriously taught to depend on the king, and assured that their effectual defence and protection would be ever found in his equity, and in their own peaceable and faithful attachment. Henry prided himself upon this progress of the reformation in Ireland, regarding it as the effect of his own political sagacity and wise policy, and certainly he resorted to the most conciliating measures to effect a change of habits and opinions among his Irish subjects. Many of them won by his grace and favour, visited the English court, where they were received and entertained with due consideration and honour, and their renewed submission received with courtly grace, many titles being conferred. O'Nial was among these Irish visitors, and repeated his submissions and engagements. He consented to renounce the style and name of O'Nial, and promised for himself, his family and followers to assume the English habit, language and manners, and to obey English law. He was created a peer of the realm of Ireland by the title of Earl of Tirowen; and his son, to whom the title was to descend, was by the same patent made Baron of Dungannon. The honour of knighthood was also conferred on two gentlemen of his retinue, and a clergyman who was of his train, and had been appointed by the pope to the see of Clogher, was confirmed in his see on resigning his papal credentials and renouncing the authority of Rome. Presents were

lavished upon all ; and a gold chain received by the new earl from the royal hand, was the pledge of favour and conciliation. Thus did all "bear with the time," and notwithstanding the plausibility of the measures, they were far from meeting the evils of the system prevailing in Ireland, and too superficial to affect the deep seated errors of the government ; they were fair as far as they went, but they left many things essential to effect any radical change, at an immeasurable distance, and little zeal and solid advantage was the result of this brilliant exterior appearance of policy. However, progress was certainly made in reformation, proved by an unusual degree of peace and tranquillity throughout the country, although the French monarch, against whom Henry had declared war, endeavoured by his emissaries to seduce the Irish into a revolt. Henry was attended to Calais by a considerable body of Irish forces, who distinguished themselves by their undaunted spirit. A few contests between the chieftains were the only causes of commotion, and the governor employed himself in arbitrating between the parties with good effect. We cannot but suppose that among the late submissions, the parties were actuated by various motives, that many were insincere, and that their aversion to Henry, and their attachment to Rome remained unshaken, although openly renounced. But a defect of union among themselves obviated any mischievous effect against the English government, while their secret discontent had no opportunity to manifest itself. Yet as a proof of the violent spirit of loyalty in some, it is stated that when the son of the Baron of Upper Ossory had committed some treasonable offence he was actually delivered up to public justice by his own father.

We have thus seen the reformation established

in Ireland, which was attended by a similar suppression of monasteries as took place in England, upon which determined scheme of the rapacious monarch we have no occasion to dwell, merely remarking that it is not the least of the inconsistencies which marked the character and conduct of Henry, that although he did thus determine to destroy all religious houses, he left money by his will for masses to be said for delivering his soul from purgatory.

“The abolition of the ancient religion much contributed,” says Hume, “to the regular execution of justice.” While the Catholic superstition subsisted in full force, there was no possibility of punishing any crime in the clergy. The church permitted not the magistrate to try the offences of her members, and she could not herself inflict any penalties upon them, the power of excommunication only resting with her. Henry restrained these pernicious immunities, the privilege of clergy was abolished for the crimes of petty treason, murder, and felony, to all under the degree of subdeacon. The former superstition also favoured crime in the laity as well as clergy, by affording them sanctuaries in the churches. The parliament abridged these privileges. It was at first declared that no sanctuaries were allowed in cases of high treason, next in those of murder, felony, burglary, rapes, and petty treason; and it limited them in other particulars. It belongs not to this history to attempt any delineation of Henry’s complicated character, which has been portrayed by so many able pens, and is to be traced in the various actions of his life and reign. His extensive authority and imperious will had retained the partisans of both the Catholic and reformed religion in subjection, but upon his demise the hopes of the protestants, and

the fears of the Catholics began to revive, and the zeal of these parties produced disputes and animosities indicating more fatal divisions, as Somerset the protector was now the avowed friend of the reformers.

Among many other invasions of ecclesiastical privileges and property which took place at this period, we must remark the irregular practice of bestowing spiritual benefices on laymen, even the Duke of Somerset was endowed with spiritual preferments, deaneries and prebends. The civil affairs of Ireland during the brief reign of the amiable Edward, afford little subject of record. The government of Sir Anthony St. Leger, although honourable to himself, and of essential service to the crown, could not preserve him from the malicious cabals of enemies, but on the accession of Edward he was confirmed in his administration. As the turbulence of the Irish was well known, and their readiness to assume arms on the slightest occasions, it was deemed necessary to send a force to the support of the government in the island headed by Bellingham, a brave and experienced commander. Nor was the precaution found unnecessary, employment was soon found for the troops in repelling several rebellious lords, who on pretence of injuries received, had taken up arms, and spread disorder through the province of Leinster. Bellingham had the military honour of gaining two considerable districts to the English territories, and was said to be the first who for several ages had enlarged the borders of the pale. As his reward, he received the honour of knighthood, and the government of Ireland which he discharged faithfully and vigilantly with a strict attention to the interests of the crown. The secret practices of the friends of Rome were in the mean time un-

remitted; alarmed at the prospect of further innovations in religion, they redoubled their assiduity, and even within the English pale were extremely successful in fomenting and propagating discontent. The vigilance of the governor, however, discovered their intrigues before they effected any serious disturbance.

Bellingham appears to have acted upon that generous and liberal policy which at that period was at least rare, that of preventing, rather than punishing the crime of rebellion. Of this we have a pleasing and amiable instance in his conduct towards the haughty Earl of Desmond. This chieftain had retired to his territory, resuming his rude magnificence and proud independence. Bellingham, who wished all suspected nobles to be under his own immediate vigilance, summoned Desmond to Dublin, and on his refusal, instantly entered Munster with a small train and surprised the chieftain at his residence. He won upon his pride by some gentle and well adapted expostulations, and the haughty Desmond yielded to his wishes, accompanied him to Dublin, where he continued subsequently to reside, and where the judicious Bellingham laboured to train him to civility, and to impress his mind both by his example and delicate instructions with the duties of social and political life. The soil was grateful, the generous zeal of the worthy Bellingham had its full effect upon the Earl. Touched with the happy change in his moral and mental condition he firmly adhered to the precepts he had received, and affectingly expressed his gratitude in daily prayers for his benefactor, by the name of *the good Bellingham*. We must be pardoned for relating this anecdote, but although not relevant to our subject, it exhibits such pleasing portraits of two

eminent individuals that we could not resist the pleasure of sketching them.

The Protector, Somerset, had successfully proceeded in the English reformation where his zeal was marked by the most barbarous violences. Books and manuscripts were destroyed without distinction, volumes of divinity suffered for their rich and costly ornaments, those of literature were with Vandal ignorance condemned as useless. Those treating of the sciences, were supposed to contain only necromancy. The libraries of Westminster and Oxford were ransacked and ordered to be cleared of the Romish missals, legends, and other superstitious volumes, in which search little discrimination was made. Severities were however not confined to the destruction of books, ornaments, and relics, but extended to the discovery of heretics and contemners of the new doctrines, so little is zeal generally tempered by judgment or humanity. But whatever were the means used, and however little they were distinguished by a generous indulgence to long established customs, the reformation extended itself rapidly in England where the dispositions of the mass of the people corresponded with those of the crown, and even it may be said preceded their rulers in the revolt from popery. It was resolved therefore by the government, that the liturgy which had lately been established by the legislature with other ordinances relative to religion should be immediately introduced into Ireland. The abilities and experience of Sir Anthony St. Leger pointed him out as an individual well calculated for this service. He was accordingly appointed lord deputy with a commission to convene a parliament on his arrival. In regard to the reformation there, the case was very different

to what it was in England ; in the latter it had as it were been met half-way, in Ireland, on the contrary it was tendered, nay even forced on a deeply prejudiced and reluctant people. Factionous opposers of every thing emanating from an English government naturally regarded every innovation, especially those in the affairs of religion as oppressive, arbitrary and injurious, and questioned every act of so offensive an authority, making it a plea for open discontent and secret intrigue. Those who possessed more peaceable dispositions, quite unskilled in the serious discussion of the great points in controversy rested indolently upon the antiquity of the former establishment, and were terrified with the dread of the denunciations of divine vengeance thundered loudly by the friends of Rome against all innovation and heresy. Under those different but equally opposing impressions, it was soon evident that although the rigour of Henry's government, and the terror of his despotic will had driven many to formal concessions and submissions, yet few had been produced by serious conviction, and of course were as easily recanted as made.

No one can call in question that our virtue and our happiness depend upon the exercise of our reason and affections, and therefore that it is of the utmost importance to give their tendencies a right direction, and by culture to cherish their growth. Neglected and untilled, what will even the richest soil produce ? Yet obvious as is this necessity no measures appear to have been taken in the infancy of the reformation in Ireland, to enlighten the ignorance of the inferior orders, nor any attempt to correct, to soften, or to remove their prejudices. " Hard is it," observes a chancellor of Ireland at this time, " that men should know their duties to God and to the king when

they shall not hear preaching or teaching throughout the year," and he further says "preaching we have none, which is our lack, without which the ignorant can have no knowledge," and when we recollect that these complaints were made, when the lower orders in England were instructed and habituated to religious inquiry, we are struck with the impolicy and injustice which regulated this direct means of preparing the minds and hearts of men to admit opinions which are at once so consonant to right reason and so calculated to improve it, consequently to affect their moral and political obligations. Removing images, and destroying reliques tended rather to terrify and disgust those who had been taught to reverence them, and to strengthen those prejudices which the measure was intended to destroy. Opinions never can be changed by rash and violent means, they yield only to those that are cautious, slow, and mild. But the cruel and absurd attempt to inspire men with faith in any peculiar mode of doctrine by acts of rigour, violence or severity has been so often and so ably combated, that it is quite unnecessary to dwell on a principle the truth of which common sense must discover and experience has demonstrated. It is equally obvious that any such attacks against religious opinions and customs never fail to engage men more strenuously to adhere to them, to exalt their respect, to augment their attachment, and to add ardency to their zeal to preserve them inviolate. The reforming zeal of archbishop Browne seems however not to have extended to the simple means of general instruction for promoting the knowledge of the reformed religion, and refining the popular mind from the gross errors of the ancient mode of faith. The causes of this impolitic omission may probably be referred to the

circumstances of so many of his clergy having abandoned their benefices rather than disdain the papal authority, and the impossibility of filling up those benefices at once with zealous and able reformers. Among his suffragans were, it is true, many Englishmen favourers of the reformation, still none are distinguished by any commendable services or laborious zeal. In fact the circumstances of the nation were unfavourable to the salutary exertions of those individuals, for the Irish language had become so universal and predominant notwithstanding the repeated laws to restrain it, that the people were inaccessible to the instructions of those strangers who had become their pastors. In the meantime the partisans of Rome found ready admission into the heart of those districts where the reformed clergy, if such there were, could neither be regarded nor understood. Speaking to their countrymen in their own language, and well acquainted with the best modes of persuasion, they were heard with attention, favour, and affection, and a contrast was naturally formed in the most uncultured minds, prejudicial to the views of the reformers. Such was the state of things in the pale, and those tracts of Irish territory which intersected the English settlements, and the prospect appears still more gloomy in regard to the moral and spiritual darkness of the people, as we penetrate into the remote provinces. In these, many of the prelates still continued to be nominated by the pope, enjoying their sees by his provision, independent of the crown of England; others, though appointed by the king, had yet a rival sent from Rome to contend with, hence continual jealousies and divisions ensued. The people removed beyond the sphere of English law, had scarcely known, and not in any way regarded the

recent ordinances respecting religion, nor considered themselves at all interested in any regulations regarding it, conceiving themselves only bound to the English government to abstain from taking up arms and invading the king's subjects. Added to these circumstances, it was believed that the lord deputy was more attentive to fulfil his duty as a statesman taking the term in an abstracted meaning, than to engage in any controversies about the modes of faith and worship or the dissèmination of the new doctrines. A parliament was not convened, but a royal proclamation was transmitted addressed to the Irish clergy, enjoining the acceptance of the new liturgy. The proclamation was cautiously worded, in order that the innovation might not shock the prejudices of those enjoined to obey it. It expressed that the prayers of the church had been *translated* into the mother tongue for the edification of the people. Saint Leger assembled the prelates and clergy, submitting the document to their inspection as the royal will and pleasure, concurring with the mature and grave opinions of the reverend clergy of England, and as the result of their wise and pious deliberations for the welfare of Ireland.

On the decease of the zealous partisan of Rome, Crozier, archbishop of Armagh, Robert Waucop had been nominated to that see by the pontiff. But Henry determined not to compromise his assumed rights, in defiance of this papal nomination, transmitted his mandate to St. Leger for the appointment of John Dowdal, a native of Ireland, to the primacy. This prelate now proved that his attachment to Rome was superior to his gratitude either to the throne or his patron the lord deputy, by whose instance he had been elevated to the see. He now stood forth at the

head of his clergy, a bold and determined opposer of the royal proclamation, treating the new liturgy with the utmost scorn, by which he remarked, every illiterate fellow might be enabled to read *mass*. St. Leger replied, that there were indeed too many illiterate priests, as ignorant of the language in which divine service had hitherto been performed as the people who attended, for that reason the present was calculated for the edification of both. He was interrupted in the midst of his address by Dowdal, with a stern and haughty admonition to beware of the clergy's curse, and after some further altercation, the enraged primate arose, and departing from the assembly, was followed by almost all of his obsequious clergy.

Archbishop Browne, who now remained the first in dignity among the prelates, declared his ready acceptance of the king's order. The Bishops of Meath, Kildare, Leighlin, and Limerick concurred and the liturgy was soon after read in the cathedral of Christchurch, Dublin, Easter day, 1551, in the presence of the lord deputy, magistrates and clergy.

Men bold enough to oppose the will of their superiors, are naturally presumed to act from pure and conscientious motives, and a sincere conviction of the truth of their own principles, and of course their mental hardihood is respected. Hence, the opposition of the archbishop of Armagh and his seceding clergy created them great popularity, and tended to confirm the affection of the people for the ancient worship. Of course, the most invidious motives were attributed to the reforming party, they were accused of worldly and temporizing views, and as men who scrupled not to sacrifice their consciences to the favour of a court. These prejudices were incalculably increased by the injudicious violence

of those commissioned to remove the objects and instruments of popular superstition. Under the pretence of obeying the orders of state, this violence of party feeling was cruelly displayed. The most valuable furniture of the churches was seized and exposed to sale without reserve or reverence. The Irish annalists describe with religious horror, (of which, however ill directed, we are not to doubt the sincerity, or to regard with contempt as the source is honourable to the feelings of the soul,) the garrison of Athlone issuing forth with a barbarous and heathen fury, and pillaging the famous church of Clonmacnoise, tearing away the most inoffensive ornaments, books, bells, plate, windows, furniture of every kind, so as to leave the shrine of their favourite Saint Kienan a hideous monument of sacrilege.

The removal of St. Leger from the government was sudden, and attributed to the representations of archbishop Browne to the court, that the opposition of the northern clergy might be traced to the indifference and remissness of St. Leger in the cause of reformation. Sir James Crofts succeeded him, and his first care was to labour by address and persuasion to soften the opposition of Dowdal and endeavour to reconcile him to the new regulations of public worship. The violent and uncompromising spirit of the prelate, rendered the task of the new deputy a difficult one. To yield an iota of his pretensions or of his opinions, he thought would betray a cowardly acknowledgment of the superiority of those he opposed, and that his supposed weakness and impotence had obliged him to listen to conciliation. The primæte was in fact universally regarded as the principal and leader of the friends of Rome, his self-love and pride were flattered by the distinction. To be the object of popular attention,

the oracle to be consulted upon a subject of such vital and extensive importance has a natural tendency to elevate the pride of man, and to give force and spirit to those prepossessions of mind which have placed him in such a commanding situation. The prelate had retired with an affected dignity of resentment from the assembly he had so indignantly quitted to the abbey of St. Mary in the suburbs of Dublin, declining all intercourse with his conforming brethren, and taking no part in the public councils. In this monastic retirement he received the conciliating letter of the deputy by the hands of his suffragan of Meath. He was reminded by this letter, of the obedience due to the sovereign which Christ himself had recommended by his example, and which the bishops of Rome had not scrupled to acknowledge, the writer expressed in terms of great sincerity, his desire of being the instrument of reconciling and uniting the primate with all his brethren, and requested him, that for this good purpose, he should appoint a place of conference, that the order and discipline of the church of Ireland might be amicably adjusted by the clergy, that any further severity on the part of the throne might be obviated. The pride of the primate was flattered by this application, and he determined to preserve his stateliness. He replied with a frigid civility, that he had good reason to fear that it would be vain for him to enter into any conference with a number of obstinate churchmen, or to hope that the differences which had occasioned his secession could be easily adjusted, the judgments and consciences of the contending parties being so entirely opposed. He, however, accepted the friendly offers of the lord deputy, and should rejoice to see him, if he would visit him in his retirement. But he did not think it

meet for him to appear at his lordship's palace. Sir James Crofts sincerely desiring to reconcile the entire body of the clergy to the royal ordinance, passed over this provoking affectation of state, and resolved to visit the abbey. It was agreed that the primate should be attended by his brethren. The conference was held in the great hall of the abbey, and was opened in the form of a theological dispute, in which the primate defended the Romish mass, and the Bishop of Meath was advocate for the reformed mode of worship. This method of decision had its natural and usual effect, for in religious controversies each one tries to support his own opinions, and practical religion is too often forgotten by both parties in the heat of argument. Each party in the present instance claimed the victory, and each retired with greater acerbity of disposition against the other. No law had as yet established the new liturgy in Ireland, therefore the archbishop persevered in his opposition with the greater confidence, as he was not obnoxious to any penalty. The authority of the court was contemned and insulted without any present power of self vindication, and the influence of the archbishop and his clergy was unrestrained. A punishment however was devised and inflicted upon the contumacious primate, which however puerile it may appear to us, was considered both grievous and mortifying at the period we are reviewing, when contests respecting ecclesiastical dignities were deemed of high importance.

The question of precedence between the sees of Armagh and Dublin, had been, as we have before remarked, agitated with violence; popes and councils had been consulted, their decisions pleaded, and even the authority of England had frequently interposed to allay their acrimony.

But the superiority of ecclesiastical privileges appeared to these contending prelates, not of such moment as whether the primate of Armagh should have his crosier borne erect within the jurisdiction of his rival. An opposition to this external mark of superiority had been deemed a sufficient reason for declining attendance in parliament, and produced strong remonstrances against the injurious violation of his dignity. The contending parties were however apparently reconciled by the decision that each prelate should be entitled to primatial dignity, and be suffered to erect his crosier in the diocese of the other, while the archbishop of Dublin should have the title of primate of Ireland, and the archbishop of Armagh was to be distinguished by that of primate of all Ireland. He had now however offended so highly, and the services of Browne had been so important, that this arrangement was entirely reversed. By the king's patent, Armagh was deprived of the superior title, and it was conferred on Browne and his successors for ever in the see of Dublin. Nothing could be imagined more mortifying than this measure to the haughty and inflexible spirit of Dowdal. And in fact it wounded the pride of the primate so much, and so roused his apprehensions of further severities, that he abandoned his see, and retired to the continent. This retreat, however, was rash and highly impolitic, as it referred to the support of the Catholic cause, while it proved that the archbishop was by no means endued with the spirit of a martyr in its defence. He abandoned the field when the popular opinion was in his favour, and deprived his party of a leader, who from his station commanded respect and reverence, and by his abandonment left his opponents to improve the opportunity of weakening his influence and under-

mining his cause. His enemies failed not to represent his retirement as a renunciation of his pastoral charge, and a successor was accordingly appointed to the see of Armagh. At the same time, John Ball was nominated to the see of Ossory. The rigid and uncomplying spirit of this acrimonious impugner of popery, manifested itself immediately upon his consecration. The dean of Christ-church on that occasion proposed that the Romish ritual should be observed, as the people were not well inclined to the reformed liturgy, and the new order of consecration had not yet been established by a parliament in Ireland. All the clergy, and even the new archbishop of Armagh, seemed willing to accede to this proposal. But Ball resolutely opposed all such condescensions. He obstinately refused to be consecrated by any but the reformed ritual, and by his firmness even terrified the clergy into a compliance. He observed the wafer prepared for the communion. He suspended the whole office until it was removed, and common bread placed on the table. The weak among the new reformed, were terrified with the inflexible resolution of the new bishop, and the Romish party beheld him with dismay and horror. His vehemence of temper was not however ill suited to the circumstances and place of his mission, and his learning, which was eminently superior to that of his Irish brethren, might have done considerable service to the protestant cause, had he regulated his conduct judiciously. But he showed no indulgence to the deep seated prejudices of his flock, and sought not to reconcile them by kindness. Bent upon the purpose of making his flock yield to the reform he had introduced, he was unmindful of that reserve and caution which were essentially necessary with a people so pow-

erfully prejudiced and bigoted. During the short period of this prelate's residence in Ireland, his life was a continued series of fear and persecution. On his first preaching the reformed doctrines his clergy forsook him or opposed him; once in particular, five of his domestics were assassinated while peaceably making hay in a meadow near his house, and the same fate would probably have awaited himself had not the chief of Kilkenny hastened to protect him with one hundred horse, and three hundred foot. This prelate was born at Cove, near Dunwich, in Suffolk, in 1495. At twelve he entered into a monastery of Carmelites at Norwich, he was thence sent to Jesus College, Oxford. He was educated in the Romish faith, but converted to the Protestant by Thomas, Lord Wentworth. On the death of Lord Cromwell, who had protected him from the persecution of the Romish clergy, he was obliged to retire into the low countries, the general refuge, where he continued during the period of eight years. Soon after the accession of Edward the sixth, he was, as we have seen, recalled, and at first presented to the living of Bishop's Stooke, in Hants, and in 1552, nominated to the see of Ossory. We shall anticipate time a little to finish the brief sketch of this prelate's life. On the accession of Mary, the tide of opposition became so strong and powerful, that to avoid assassination he embarked for Holland, but was unfortunate in his escape. First he was taken by a Dutch man of war, and robbed by the captain of all his effects. Then being forced by stress of weather into St. Ives, Cornwall, he was confined on suspicion of treason. Being however released after some days confinement, the ship anchored in Dover road, where he was again seized on a false accusation. After his arrival in Holland, he was retained a prisoner

three weeks, and at length obtained his liberty by engaging to pay thirty pounds. From Holland he travelled to Basle in Switzerland, where he continued till Elizabeth ascended the throne. After his return to England, he was made prebendary of Canterbury, probably not choosing to return to his Irish flock. He died, November, 1565, at Canterbury, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He was so severe a writer against the church of Rome, that his books were particularly prohibited in the expurgatory index, published at Madrid in folio, in 1667.

To return to the transactions from which this sketch has diverted our attention; the apprehensions of disorder from religious controversy, and the general attachment manifested by the people to their ancient mode of faith and worship, rendered a cautious and vigilant attention to civil affairs essentially necessary. But an inveterate adherence to the manners and institutions of former ages was the great obstacle in every attempt to preserve the different inhabitants within the bounds of peace and submission, and the Irish appeared particularly tenacious of their grandeur and independence, at this period when England was gradually regaining that extent of influence and dominion, which had from various causes been diminished. So rooted appeared the determination not to permit any innovation, that an Irish annalist of the period mentions an attempt to break in upon the ancient institutions which a long series of ages had established among his countrymen as a fair and justifiable cause of taking up arms, and the factious and turbulent septs were ready to avail themselves of any fair plea to justify their restless animosities.

Although not immediately connected with our principal subject, it is necessary to advert to the

faction disorders of the great northern family of O'Nial, as they were particularly distressing to the English government at this period. The Earl of Tirowen, notwithstanding the amplitude of his submission, had by no means lost sight of the greatness and regal splendour of his family, and was little disposed to forego the proud distinction. He had once pronounced a curse on those of his posterity who should ever conform to the English manners, or associate with any of the Saxon race. Returned to an intercourse with his kinsmen and followers, after having tendered his submission to Henry at his court, the impressions there received were soon lost, and his long cherished and favourite ideas of individual nobility, or rather regality, revived in all their original force. His son Matthew, whom he had declared his heir, and who in consequence it will be remembered, was created Baron of Dungannon, was really illegitimate, and this extraordinary favour shewn by him to the youth, could not fail to arouse the jealousy of his legitimate children. This domestic dissension was inflamed by treachery, which ultimately spread its devastating power through the fairest and most flourishing district of the whole island, and though the flame of discord subsided in some degree at intervals, it was many years ere it was quite extinguished. Nor was the turbulence of the ambitious family of the O'Nial suppressed, until it had operated most injuriously upon the affairs of Ireland.

1553. In the meantime, the premature death of the amiable Edward had a powerful effect in the ecclesiastical system, threatening destruction to the weak efforts which had been made to introduce the reformation into Ireland. When Mary was proclaimed in London, directions were given that a like proclamation should be made to

all her loving subjects in Ireland. The officers of state were confirmed in their several departments, and particular grants were conferred on various persons who pleaded their services and sufferings, among whom John Dowdal was restored to the dignity of primate of *all* Ireland, and invested with the priory of Athirdee. With a similar clemency as was observed in England by Mary on her accession, a general pardon was granted to her subjects in Ireland, and no violent changes in religion were attempted. A license only was published for the celebration of mass, unattended with penalty or compulsion, and among the royal titles, that of the supreme head of the church on earth was retained in the acts of state. Mary granted many conciliating marks of favour to her Irish subjects, amongst which graces we may mention the complete restoration of the noble family of Kildare, a young scion of which, it will be recollected, was saved by the interposition of an aunt, and sent to the continent for protection. This accomplished young noble had returned to England in the reign of Edward, and by an union with the daughter of Sir Anthony Browne, formed an interest which soon gained him the royal favour. He was knighted and restored to a considerable portion of the possessions of his family. To these were now added by Mary the honours of his ancestry, and she soon after vested him with all the honours forfeited by the attainder of his father.

Sir Anthony St. Leger, who had been entrusted with the government of Ireland, when the new regulations of divine worship were to be established in the reign of Edward, was again made the deputy under whose auspices they were to be abolished. The reformed clergy naturally anticipated the rising storm, when they saw

Dowdal invested with the primacy. Ball, Bishop of Ossory, we have seen, was obliged to flee before its force should overwhelm him; others were less alive to the danger, or more determined to meet it manfully. Many of them, on renouncing the authority of Rome, had used the liberty allowed by the change, and taken wives, and were therefore now obnoxious to the popish canons. The Archbishop of Armagh received a commission to inquire into this offence, and in conjunction with the new Bishop of Meath, to deprive the married clergy. Staples, the former Bishop of Meath, was first removed, to make way for his judge; Browne of Dublin, whose zeal had rendered him perfectly unpardonable, Lancaster of Kildare, and Traverse of Leighlin, were successively ejected, and their sees filled with ecclesiastics devoted, of course, to Rome. Several of the inferior clergy were treated with a like severity, and the violent Dowdal, in his synods, outran the zeal of government, proceeding indefatigably to re-establish the whole popish system. All other ordinances with respect to religion were as yet suspended, and St. Leger and his successor, Fitzwalter, Earl of Sussex, were left at leisure to repress the disorders perpetually arising in different quarters of the island, between the old and new settlers, and the local quarrels of the chiefs. But Sussex was at length diverted from a warfare conferring little honour, by affairs occurring of greater moment.

Mary's fiery zeal had kindled the flame of persecution in England; and she now projected to extend her tender mercies to Ireland, and there, as in England, to tear up every root of heresy. With this view, Sussex was directed to convene a parliament, in order that the great business of the re-establishment of the ancient

faith and discipline might, without delay, be effected. Accordingly, lords and commons assembled June 1, 1556; a bull from Cardinal Pole was delivered by the lord deputy to the chancellor, to be read in the assembly. It recited the fatal separation of Ireland from the see of Rome, attributed it to fear rather than to free-will, as proved by the readiness of the whole island to return to the obedience of the sovereign pontiff, on the accession of Mary, that immaculate princess, who had with such firmness and constancy preserved herself pure from the pollution of heresy. It pronounced a plenary absolution on all the inhabitants from this their offence, ratifying at the same time all dispositions of benefices, confirming marriages, dispensations, and other ecclesiastical proceedings during the late schism; securing the possession of church lands to those who had been vested with them, and enjoining parliament to abrogate all laws enacted against the supremacy of Rome. The bull was read aloud by the chancellor kneeling, and received by the whole assembly in the same humble posture, in token of reverence and contrition. After this ceremony, they adjourned to the cathedral, where *Te Deum* was solemnly chaunted, and public thanksgivings offered in the most affecting forms of worship, for the present happy restoration of the realm to the unity of the holy church. It is almost unnecessary to advert to the powerful effects of the splendid and striking system of Romish worship, so calculated to affect the senses, and raise the imagination. And although protestants, in the simplicity of their forms, endeavour to worship in spirit and in truth, few will deny the influence of external circumstances, of time, place, and manner, in awakening devotional associations, and feelings of piety.

The bended knee, the supplicating attitude, the responses of prayer, the harmonious swell of praise, the organ's peal, the elevated host, the fragrant incense, and the adoration of the sacerdotal ministers, altogether awaken an enthusiasm, a degree of mental excitement, which must be felt to be understood. Hence it may easily be imagined, that this devout preparation served to strike the people who crowded to share in it, with a double abhorrence of the late heretical innovations.

Amongst other acts, the parliament proceeded to revive all statutes made in Ireland for the punishment of heresy, solemnly ratified and established all the provisions of the bull, transmitted by the legate Pole, repealing all acts made against the holy see. They also re-established the jurisdiction of the pope, discharging the payment of first-fruits to the crown, and restoring to the church the rectories, glebes, and other ecclesiastical emoluments vested in the crown since the 28th of Henry VIII. so as to reserve only the lands granted to the laity. With the acts of this parliament, relative to civil affairs, we shall not weary our readers, but shall advert to one of a private nature, as connected with our subject. The successor to George Browne in the see of Dublin, presented a petition to the parliament, complaining of devastations made in the archiepiscopal right during the late schism. His application, as may be supposed, was favourably received, and it was enacted, that all conveyances made of the lands and possessions belonging to the see, by Archbishop Browne, without a royal license, all demises of any parcel of the archbishopric to his own use, or to that of any bastard of his, should be utterly void. Thus we see the fiery spirit of popish zeal, which in Eng-

land was glutting its vengeance with the tortures of individuals of both sexes, and all ranks, was happily in Ireland confined to reversing the acts of an obnoxious prelate, and affixing an opprobrious name to his offspring. The few assertors of the reformation, who had not from apprehended danger fled from the kingdom, were leniently allowed by the Irish government to sink into obscurity and neglect. There were no zealous adversaries of popery, rendering themselves conspicuous, and provoking the severity of persecution; but the whole nation seemed to have relapsed into that lethargy of ignorance and superstition from which they had partially been awakened.

As Ireland thus escaped the effects of Mary's rancorous and cruel bigotry, several English families of the reformed religion fled into Ireland, enjoying there their opinions and their worship in privacy, without notice or molestation. A popular story prevailed in the subsequent reign, which offers an instance of important events hinging upon trifling incidents, and informs us, that Mary fully intended to extend her bloody zeal to Ireland, as she had displayed it in England. She appointed Dr. Cole, Dean of St. Paul's, one of the commissioners, to execute her commands. On the doctor's arrival at Chester, the mayor of that city being a zealous churchman, waited on the dean in order to pay his respects, and in the course of the interview, the reasons of his passing over to Ireland being adverted to, the doctor showed his visitor the queen's commission, saying, "here is a commission which shall lash the heretics in Ireland." The landlady of the inn where the dean was accommodated, was well affected towards the protestants, and having a brother professing similar sentiments

residing at Dublin, was exceedingly troubled at the words of the dean, which she had accidentally heard during her attendance upon him. She resolved if possible to possess herself of this persecuting commission, and watching the opportunity when the mayor took his leave, the dean attending him down the stairs, she opened the box containing the dangerous paper, and introduced in lieu of it a pack of cards, folded in paper, the knave of clubs being placed uppermost. The dean returning to his apartment, put by his box, little suspecting the ingenuity which had been executed. The following day he embarked for Ireland, and landed at Dublin. Eager to execute the commands of his royal mistress, he immediately repaired to the castle, the Lord Fitzwalter being deputy. Without delay he requested a conference with him and the privy council, which being granted, he opened the subject of his commission, and presented the box to the lord deputy to examine the document, conferring upon him the authority of proceeding vigorously against the heretics. The lord deputy caused the box to be opened, and directed the secretary should read the royal commission in due form; the packet was accordingly unfolded, when lo! the cards appeared. The lord deputy and the council regarded each other with surprise, and the doctor's confusion may be imagined; he declared he had a commission, but knew not where it was gone; the lord deputy remarked with well-affected gravity, "Let us have another commission, and we will shuffle the cards the meanwhile." The poor doctor being troubled in his mind at the unaccountable loss, retired from the council in confusion, and returning to England as quickly as possible, he actually did obtain a second commission; and again hastened to sail for Ireland,

but was prevented by a contrary wind. While waiting in momentary expectation of a favouring breeze, the intelligence reached him of Mary's decease; "and thus the providence of God," observes the narrator of this anecdote, "preserved the protestants of Ireland." Our authority adds, that Queen Elizabeth was so pleased with this story related to her by Lord Fitzwalter on his return to England, that she sent for the ingenious female, and granted her a pension of forty pounds per annum during her life. (*See Cox Hibernia Anglicana, or History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 308. Also *Harleian Misc.*)

We pass over the local war which desolated several districts of the country at this period, and in which the English government had neither power nor authority to interpose.

Sussex had been recalled to England, and Sir Henry Sydney, who administered the government in his absence, in conjunction with the Archbishop of Dublin, found ample employment in regulating the affairs of the pale. Synods were held by the clergy, in which they formed their constitutions for the re-establishment of the ancient rites and ceremonies. Various ornaments of the churches, which had been conveyed away, were assiduously sought, recovered, and replaced. The priory of Kilmainham was, however, in exception to the general regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, restored to the church.*

Several Irish chieftains of inferior note were reconciled to a government so zealously attached to the Romish communion, and consented to swear allegiance. Sussex, however, on his return, had, several violences of the contending

* Kilmainham. A priory for knights hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. was founded here, and a house

chiefs to repress, amongst the most powerful and troublesome of whom was Daniel O'Brien, who had endeavoured to dispossess his nephew of the sovereignty of Thomond. The nephew consented to hold the lands annexed to the title, (preserved to him by the assistance of Sussex,) as an English subject, swore allegiance to the king and queen, together with all his retainers, in the most solemn form, renouncing also the name of O'Brien, to the utter mortification of his followers. The annalists thus speak of his renunciation: "He accepted the title of earl, but gave up the dignity of Daleais, to the astonishment and indignation of all the descendants of Heber, Ucremon, and Ith."

During part of the reign of the cruel bigot Mary, Paul IV. filled the papal chair.* He was the most haughty pontiff who had for several ages been elevated to the dignity. He was highly offended that Mary should presume to retain among her titles that of Queen of Ireland, affirming that it belonged to him alone, as he saw meet and proper either to erect new kingdoms, or to abolish the old. But to avoid disputes with the new converts, he did think proper to erect Ireland into a kingdom, and then he admitted the title, as if it had been assumed from his own concession. This was not an unfrequent artifice of the popes, to give allowance to what they could not prevent, and afterwards pretend that princes, while they exercised their own powers, were only acting by authority from the papacy. Paul had at first intended to oblige Mary formally to recede from this title, before he would

* He was elected after the age of eighty; his nephews governed every thing. The inquisitions were violent at

Rome, and after his death the people burned the prisons of that tribunal.

condescend to bestow it upon her, but circumstances made him determine to proceed in a less haughty manner.

Before we close our review of the changes which took place in the ecclesiastical polity in Ireland at this period, we will give the personal sketch of Archbishop Browne from Usher, who thus describes this zealous friend and promoter of protestantism. "George Browne was a plain man with a cheerful countenance, in his acts and deeds plain and downright, to the poor merciful and compassionate, pitying the state and conduct of the souls of the people, and advising them when he was provincial of the Augustine order in England, to make their application only to Christ, which advice, coming to the ears of Henry VIII. he became a favourite, and was made Archbishop of Dublin." The biographer then proceeds to describe the zeal of the archbishop; the character of the Jesuits was admirably described, and their transactions and fate foretold with a sagacity almost prophetic, by Archbishop Browne, so early as 1551, in a sermon preached by him at Dublin. The sermon is to be found in the fifth volume of the Harleian Misc.; the passage referring to the Jesuits is: "But there is a new fraternity of late sprung up, who call themselves Jesuits, which will deceive many, who are much after the Scribes and Pharisees' manner amongst the Jews. They shall strive to abolish the truth, and come very near to do it. For these sorts will turn themselves into many different forms; with the heathens, a heathenist; with the atheists, an atheist; with the Jew's, a Jew; with the reformers, a reformade;—purposely to know your intentions, your minds, your hearts, and your inclinations, and thereby bring you at last to be like the fool, who

said in his heart *There is no God*. These shall spread over the whole world, shall be admitted into the councils of princes, and they never the wiser, charming of them; yea, making your princes reveal their hearts, and the secrets therein, and yet they not perceive it; which will happen from falling from the laws of God, by neglecting to fulfil the law of God, and by winking at their sins; yet in the end, God, to justify his law, shall suddenly cut off this society, even by the hands of those who had most succoured them, and made use of them; so that at the end they shall become odious to all nations. They shall be worse than Jews, having no resting-place upon earth; and then shall a Jew have more favour than a Jesuit." (*See Note in Mosheim, vol. iv. p. 191.*)

CHAPTER XII.

Accession of Elizabeth—Earl of Sussex governor of Ireland—Commutations—Inflamed by religious antipathy—Severe measures—Rebellion of John O’Nial—Parliament convened to establish the reformed religion—Ecclesiastical system of Mary reversed—Penal statutes enacted—Sussex returns to England, appoints Sir William Fitz William—Statutes evaded and neglected—Indulgence of the queen—Difficulties of Sir Henry Sydney’s government—Feuds of the houses of Desmond and Ormond—Intrigues of the enemies of the reformed religion—Acts of the parliament—Attaints John O’Nial—Prejudices against Elizabeth—Government of Sir John Perrot—His vigorous government—A colony from England to people the Ulster lands—Earl of Essex, his expedition to colonise—Unfortunate result—Designs of Philip II. upon Ireland—Thomas Stukeley—Intrigues with the papists—Pope Gregory XIII. encourages him—James Fitzmaurice a tool of the Romanists—His design of invading Ireland—Catastrophe of Stukeley—Fitzmaurice lands in Kerry—Insincerity of the Earl of Desmond—Disappointment of the invader—Catastrophe of Fitzmaurice—Lord Grey recalled—Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, appointed lord justice, in conjunction with Sir Henry Wallop—Miserable death of Saunders—Sir John Perrot governor—His extensive plans of improvement—His enemies falsely represent him to the queen—Her unjust suspicions—Scheme of re-peopling Munster with an English colony—Rebellion of De Burgho—Hugh O’Nial, his character—He goes to the English court—His insinuating arguments—His petition granted—He returns elated to Ireland—His deep designs—Tirowen repairs to England—His duplicity—He is charged with having entered into treaty with Spain—He artfully evades the charge, and the restrictions he had agreed to—Foundation of the University of Dublin—Opposition of Loftus and Sir John Perrot—Tirowen discloses his ambitious designs—Spain sends assistance to the insurgents—The war justly to be regarded as religious—Sir John Norris removed from power—Lord Burgh succeeds him—His vigorous measures—His sudden death—Tirowen recurs to his former dissimulation to

gain time—He succeeds in procuring pardon—Unfortunate affair of Blackwater, favourable to the rebels—Distresses of the country—Essex accepts the government of Ireland, with the title of Lord Marshal—Resistance of the insurgent Irish—Incaution of Essex lays him open to his enemies—Oviedo named by the pope archbishop of Dublin—Elevation of Tir-owen—Publishes a manifesto—Makes a pilgrimage—Letters to the pope—Bull granting indulgencies to Irish insurgents—Extracts from manifesto—Royalists act on defensive.

1558. ON the accession of Elizabeth, the Earl of Sussex was considered as an able and meritorious governor of Ireland, who, with a small force had retained that turbulent people in peace and regularity. We must be understood to speak comparatively, for the provinces were never free from disorder. The Irish princes and nobles, always divided amongst themselves, were ready enough to pay exterior obeisance to powers they were unable to resist; but as no durable force or permanent government was maintained to retain them in subjection; they were for ever relapsing into disorder and independence. But insufficient as was the English authority to establish order and obedience among the people, it was yet sufficient to check the growth of any enterprise among the natives, and though it failed in bestowing a general, true, and salutary form of government, it was able to prevent the rise of any such form from the internal policy or combination of the Irish. Thus, although the dominion of the English over Ireland had been established above four centuries, it yet might still be regarded as little more than nominal.

Slight as our sketch has been, it must have apprised the reader that the conduct of England towards Ireland was, from the beginning of what is termed the conquest, impolitic and absurd: "Instead of inviting," says Hume, "the Irish

to adopt the more civilised customs of their conquerors, they refused, though earnestly solicited, to communicate to them the privilege of their laws, and every where marked them out as aliens and enemies. By this and other instances of imprudent policy, the Irish remained in the same wretched and abject state as when first invaded." At a period when every Christian nation was cultivating with ardour every civil art of life, the rudeness and ignorance of the Irish were extreme. The ancient superstition, the practices and observances of their progenitors, mingled and corrupted by many wild opinions, still maintained an unshaken empire over them; and the reformation, as we have seen, was odious to them not only as it affected those deep-seated prejudices, but also because it emanated from a people whom they had never ceased to hate, although sometimes obliged to submit. At the period at which we are now arrived, the ancient opposition of manners, laws, and interests was inflamed by religious antipathy, and the subduing and civilising the country seemed to be even more impracticable than ever. A series of commotions disturbed the nation, and the most severe measures were deemed necessary to restore order. From a passage in a letter from the primate Dowdal, on the state of Ireland, written in the last year of Mary's reign, although it is cautiously expressed, yet it is sufficiently evident that the contending chieftains were severely treated. Two whom he names, O'Moore and O'Connor, he advises may be restored to grace, and invested with some part of their old territory, from which they had been ejected. "But peradventure," he remarks, "some men will reckon this way to be not for the queen's honour, to make peace with that people that hath so many times digressed from

their promise and orders taken with them, as it is said. And whether it be so or not I do not know it; but admit it be, men must consider the rudeness of such people, and the *occasion* of such war, &c."

It is unnecessary to enter into the detail of the rebellion raised by John O'Nial, of his subsequent submission, reception into the queen's favour, and promises of duty and obedience, the subsequent violation of those promises and his tragical end, as these particulars are all narrated in histories well known. The Earl of Sussex returned to his government supplied with special instructions for establishing the reformed religion. For this purpose he was commissioned to convene a parliament for enacting statutes similar to those already made in England. The sentiments of Elizabeth with respect to religion were well known, and lords and commons met on January 11, 1560, fully aware of the purpose of their convocation, but far from being universally well disposed towards the projected regulations. So various and so continual had been the changes and the reverses in respect to religion during the three preceding reigns, that the partizans of Rome affected to lament those distractions, as the mischievous result of the revolt from the ancient system, and urged that to give rest and tranquillity to the disturbed consciences and minds of men, it was absolutely necessary to resist all further innovation. From the catalogue of this parliament, it appears that most of the temporal lords were those whose descendants even to the present time continued firmly attached to the Romish communion, but that the greatest number of prelates were such as quietly enjoyed their sees, by conforming occasionally to different modes of religion, nor does it appear that of the number (amounting to nineteen).

more than two, viz. of Meath and Kildare, were strong and determined adherents to the ancient religion. The representatives of ten counties were only summoned in the commons, the rest which made up the number seventy six, were citizens and burgesses of those towns where the royal authority was predominant, and therefore, it can be no subject of surprise, that after a session of a few weeks, the entire ecclesiastical system of Mary was reversed by a series of statutes conformable to those already enacted by the English legislature. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction was restored to the crown, and of consequence a new oath of supremacy, the laws against heresy repealed, the use of the common prayer enforced with such alterations as had been already made in England, and all subjects were commanded to attend the public service of the church. The first fruits, and twentieth parts of all church revenues were restored to the crown, and the form of electing prelates by deans and chapters, by virtue of the writ called *Congé d'Elire* was entirely abolished in Ireland as being attended with unnecessary delays and costs, and derogatory to the royal prerogative. The queen was styled *governess*, not *head* of the church, but it comprised the same extensive power, which under the latter title had been exercised by her father and brother. This act was strenuously opposed by the bishops, but it passed; by it the crown, without the concurrence either of the parliament or of the convocation, was vested with the whole spiritual power, might repress all heresies, establish or repeal all canons, alter every point of discipline, ordain or abolish any rite or ceremony. Whoever refused to take the oath, acknowledging the queen's supremacy, was incapacitated from holding any office. Whoever denied this supremacy, or at-

tempted to deprive the queen of that prerogative, forfeited for the first offence all his goods and chattels; for the second, was subjected to a penalty of a premunire; but the third offence was deemed treason. As the nomination of the bishops rested with the queen, she was empowered on the vacancy of any see to seize all the temporalities, and to bestow on the bishop elect an equivalent in the impropriations belonging to the crown. This equivalent was however much inferior in value. The bishops and all incumbents were prohibited from alienating their revenues, and from granting leases for a longer term than twenty-one years, or three lives. But an exception was made in favour of the crown, therefore great abuses still prevailed on this point, it being usual for the courtiers to make an agreement with a bishop or incumbent, and to procure a fictitious alienation to the queen, who subsequently transferred the lands to the persons agreed on. It was provided by letters patent, under the great seal of England and Ireland, that the chief governor duly authorised, shall by his letters patent, collate to all vacant sees, that persons so collated shall be consecrated and invested with their rights, and that the prelates directed to consecrate them shall pay due obedience to the royal mandate, within twenty days under the penalties of the statute of premunire. Penalties were enacted against those who departed from the reformed mode of worship as well as against those who absented themselves from the church and the sacraments. But as a proof that Elizabeth proceeded with gradual steps, and made no hasty innovations on the prejudices of her Irish subjects, it was provided in the act enforcing attendance on public worship, that as in most places of the realm, there cannot be found English ministers, and as the Irish language is

difficult to be printed, and that few can read the Irish letters, the queen is humbly prayed that it may be enacted that in every church where the minister hath no knowledge of the Irish tongue, it may be lawful for him to officiate in Latin. Although this did not of course effectually provide for the edification of the people, it had certainly a tendency to soften the acrimony of prejudice against the reformed worship, by allowing it to be performed in the usual language of their devotions to which they had been accustomed ; those who have to guide minds will not, and ought not to despise those habits to which time has given a sanction, and from which the mind must be gradually disengaged, not violently rent. Another act of the parliament restored the priory of St. John of Jerusalem to the crown, by revoking all dispositions made of the revenues by Missingbund the late prior, a zealous partisan of Rome, who had been suspected of fomenting insurrections. Either from a consciousness of guilt or a dread of power the prior fled, and it was enacted by this parliament, that he should be required by proclamation to surrender within forty days, or be attainted of high treason. So powerful had been the opposition in this parliament, that Sussex dissolved it in a few weeks, and repaired to England, entrusting his government to Sir William Fitz William, who possessed too little consideration to manage a people now particularly irritated by the violence offered to their religious prejudices. All was clamour and confusion, the Romish partizans loudly inveighed against the heretical queen and her impious ministers. Those of the clergy who refused to conform, abandoned their cures, and no reformed ministers could be found to supply their places, the people were consequently left without religious worship or in-

struction, and the churches fell to ruin in many places. Even in places more civilized, the recently made statutes were evaded and neglected with impunity, while the ignorant were assiduously taught to despise and abhor a government which they heard consigned to all the terrors of divine vengeance. They were vehemently exhorted to stand prepared for a glorious opportunity of asserting the cause of religion whose authority had been profaned, and they were encouraged by assurances of support in their resistance, both from the pope and also the king of Spain, who was highly offended with Elizabeth.

The reluctance with which the late statutes were received, and the indulgence which Elizabeth, notwithstanding her spirit and firmness, was obliged to manifest towards her Irish subjects at this time, is evidenced in the following letter to the privy council. "And whereas by other your letters of the second of September, ye declare, that by reason of the absence of sundry of the chapter of Armagh, the dean there cannot conveniently proceed to the election of Mr. Adam Softhowse to that archbishopricke according to the auctority lately received from us, and for supplie thereof, doo devise to make unto hym in the mean season, a commission for the ordering of ecclesiastical causes within that diocese; moving further, that the rents growing out of the possessions of that archbishopricke might be bestowed upon hym by warrant from us, and the same to be holden without accompte from the date of our letters of nomination. We do very well allow your said devise, and doo gyve auctority unto youe, oure said deputy chancellor, and everie other our officers to whom it shall appertain as well to make out under our great seale, and otherwise as the case may move, and as many

writings as shall be conveniente for the performance thereof towards hym, as alsoe to give due allowance of the saide revenues by way of accompte as of money by us speciallie granted unto hym, by warrante hereof, and so to continue until he may receive his establishment in the bishopricke by such ordinary means, as in semblable cases has been accustomed." It would appear from this document, that the statute for abolishing the writ of Congé d'Elire was either already forgotten, or that it was not intended to be executed strictly and generally. That these epochs marked the progress of thought in the eternal career of time is a truth, the student of history will not question; the reformation was doubtless an era of inquiry, and of that enlightened conviction, which sincere inquiry produces.

Though the catholic faith adapting itself as it does to the senses, and enjoining various ceremonious observances, is calculated to fix the mind, and exalt the imagination more than the reformed which is more spiritual, and resting upon internal belief, yet the proportion of zeal as well as, undoubtedly, of knowledge, during the first ages of the reformation, was on the side of the protestants; they united a lively faith with a keen spirit of enquiry, their belief was invigorated by their reason, and their reason expanded under the influence of their belief, each giving a salutary impulse to the other. "Examination," says an eminent writer and deep investigator of human nature, "may weaken that habitual faith which men do well to preserve as much as they can, but when man comes out of his enquiries more religious than when he entered into them, it is then religion is built upon an immutable basis, it is then that harmony exists between her and knowledge, and that they mutually assist.

each other." The intelligent mind will readily apply this to that examination which has truth for its object, and seeks for it in the sacred page unadulterated with the jarring opinions of men. But it is to be feared that borrowed convictions too often satisfy the mind, which is too indolent to search sincerely in that mine where alone the jewel is found in genuine lustre. It was internal conviction which was the aim and pursuit of the reformers, the religion from which they endeavoured to emancipate themselves and their fellow-men was become little more than a political power, devoted to, and resting in temporal interests. Ignorance, secrecy, and darkness, were its ministering spirits, the human mind was fettered by its essential principles, and in order to support its power, it encouraged men supinely to rest in external rites, absurd ceremonies, and unmeaning forms, to which the mass of the people were incapable of affixing any definite ideas.*

To follow the detail of our history through the difficulties which during eleven years Sir Henry Sydney, one of the most active governors which Ireland had enjoyed for a long period had to struggle with, in repressing the disorders which agitated the kingdom, would lead us too far from our subject. It must suffice to say, in order to preserve the thread of our retrospect, that the Earl of Desmond, in 1569, gave him great disturbance from the hereditary animosity prevailing between this haughty chief and the Earl of Ormond, descended from the only family which had undeviatingly preserved its fidelity to the

* Hence, when we reflect upon the extreme ignorance of the Irish, and the violence of their passions we must cease to be surprised at the opposition they made to a religion of thought.

crown. The war between these chiefs ended in the defeat of Desmond, who was wounded and taken prisoner. His bitter enmity to his adversary, or rather the hereditary hatred of his family was evinced at the moment when the Ormondjans conveyed him wounded from the field of warfare stretched on a bier. His supporters exclaimed with a triumph well suited to their barbarous ignorance, "Where is now the great Earl of Desmond!" "Where, but in his proper place? still upon the necks of the Butlers," was the spirited reply of the chief, who in the language of the queen's letters, "had not been brought up where law and justice had been frequented." This and other similar contests and disaffection continued to harass the country, till Sydney in the midst of faction and discontent obeyed the mandate of his royal mistress, and convened a parliament, in order to make the necessary provisions both for the civil and ecclesiastical reformation of the kingdom. Public peace and tranquillity are so inseparably connected with the interests of the crown, that to support the one, the welfare of the other must be favoured. But the numerous party of the enemies of the reformed religion, actuated by various motives very distinct from religious zeal, attended parliament with a determined resolution to oppose every measure emanating from the throne; Sydney was well aware of their secret practices long continued, and the disaffection of many was glaring; these intentions, therefore, were foreseen, and every effort had been made to strengthen the interest of administration, even to the committing of great irregularities in the elections and returns of the commons; numbers of Englishmen having been elected and returned as burgesses for towns, which they had never seen or known, much less been residents of as directed

by law. Four days passed in clamourous altercation, the discontented members violently refusing to receive any bill or proceed to any business. The lord deputy was informed by the speaker of the objections, the judges were consulted, at length the opposing party were reluctantly obliged to concede, but determined to oppose most decidedly every measure of those they called the English and court faction. And in fact, so violent was the flame, and so great the confusion, that the assembly was obliged to be adjourned, till the violence of the contending parties was in some degree allayed. In a few days, by the aid of some temperate advisers, they consented to resume their places, and enter upon public business. The most remarkable provision made by this parliament in respect to religion, was that whereby the governor was authorised to present to the dignities of Munster and Connaught for ten years, in consequence of the abuses observed to have taken place in those provinces; "in admitting unworthy persons to ecclesiastical dignities without lawfulness of birth, learning, English habit, or English language, descended of unchaste and unmarried abbots, priests, deans, and chaunters, and obtaining their dignities by force, simony, or other corrupt means."

Among the bills transmitted under the great seal of England previous to the convention of this parliament, we find one for the reparation of parochial churches, and one for the erection of free schools. The latter was not obtained till the fifth session, and the former was either not received or rejected, a proof of the strength of prejudice yet existing, and the determined opposition to the propagation of the reformed religion. This parliament also passed an act of attainder against the turbulent and haughty chieftain John O'Nial,

ordaining that the name of the O'Nial, with all the ceremonies of his creation shall be extinguished and abolished, and that whoever shall assume the title, shall suffer the penalties of high treason. It declares Ulster to be exempt from the rule and authority of O'Nial, and vests the lands for ever in the crown, with a particular provision for a branch, in consequence of dutiful submission. By this attainder a large part of Ulster was vested in the queen, to be by her disposed of, as it should be deemed most conducive to the interest and security of her government. But although thus declared to be forfeited to the crown, no immediate seizure was made of the lands, the Irish being still permitted to enjoy them, without duty or acknowledgment, even the abbey lands and houses were possessed by the clergy, and three northern bishoprics, those of Clogher, Derry, and Raphoe, were still granted by the pope without controul. This is not the only defect in the execution of the laws which occur in the history of Ireland, which perhaps may not be so much attributed to the want of attention and vigour in the government, as to the commotions continually agitating the country preventing its being reduced to that degree of civility and national polity, which from the long period which it had been subjected to English power, might lead us to imagine it would.

The natives having been injudiciously excluded with contemptuous insolence from every situation of trust and honour, it was natural for them not to be well affected towards a government which thus regarded them as aliens and enemies. It was also perfectly natural that they should regard with jealousy and hatred those English adventurers who thus treated them. What now added to the prejudices of the people, was also

the circumstance of the pope having fulminated his sentence of excommunication against Elizabeth, whom the ignorant, in consequence, readily regarded as an usurper, deposed by her spiritual sovereign, and consigned by him to perdition; and it would appear, that the malignant operation of these prejudices was not counteracted by any equitable and conciliating measures on the part of those entrusted with the inferior offices of government. During a series of years, nothing but commotion and rebellion occupies the page of Irish history; and it appears to have been an unhappy and dangerous expedient of Sir John Perrot, when he, in 1585, during the period he administered the government, put arms into the hands of the Irish inhabitants of Ulster, in order to enable them, without the aid of government, to repress the incursions of the Scottish invaders, by which those parts were much infested. At the same time, the invitations of the King of Spain, joined to their religious zeal, engaged many of the Irish to serve in the Low Country wars, and thus Ireland, being provided both with officers and soldiers, disciplined and armed, became formidable to the English, as she was able to maintain a more regular warfare against her ancient foes. Sir John Perrot was a severe, spirited, and vigorous officer; he was supposed to be the natural son of Henry VIII., and inherited a full portion of the pride, fire, and inflexibility of his reputed royal father. He subdued the rebels, and so effectually suppressed commotions, that projects were formed in England for the improvement of the state of Ireland, and more especially for establishing a plantation of English settlers in those parts of Ulster which had been forfeited to the crown. One colony was transported with the fairest hopes of success,

which, however, were soon blasted, by the assassination of the principal colonists, through the treachery of one of the O'Nials. The next adventurer was Walter Devereux, lately created Earl of Essex, who tendered his services for reducing the district of Clan-hu-boy, in Ulster. With ardent expectation, and sanguine in his hopes, Essex mortgaged his estate to the queen for ten thousand pounds, in order to carry into effect the purposes of his expedition. Several Englishmen of distinction imbibed his ardour, and determined to accompany him. But jealousy of his independent authority created him enemies from the moment of his arrival, as it had also operated in encouraging him to the enterprise, for his enemies at the English court, especially Leicester, were glad of the opportunity of removing him. Disappointment, difficulty, and distress attended Essex throughout; *his friends forsook him, and he himself died of a distemper, occasioned, it was supposed, by vexation and disappointment in an enterprise of which he had formed such sanguine hopes.*

During the progress of these events, the lord deputy Fitzwilliam intercepted by his vigilance letters from Rome, addressed to the Irish natives, wherein the pope earnestly exhorted them to persevere in their opposition to the queen's government, with assurance of being supplied with money and troops, and promise of absolution to themselves and posterity to the third generation. Thus was the flame continually fanned by the insidious practices of a power which felt its empire tottering. In the mean time, Elizabeth was obliged to make many concessions, as her foreign enemies created apprehensions. The mutual jealousies and suspicions between her and the King of Spain, in consequence of the assistance she

gave to the Netherlands, had nearly arisen to a confirmed enmity, and the confused and turbulent situation of Ireland pointed out to Philip an obvious method of retaliation, that of fomenting and aiding the insurrectionary spirit in that kingdom. At Rome, the heretical Elizabeth was regarded with horror and detestation, and every desperate fugitive, who could suggest any scheme of annoying her, was there received with favour. Such an adventurer was Thomas Stukely, an Englishman, whose nefarious conduct during the reign of Edward VI. had rendered him obnoxious to the laws, and he fled to Ireland. His enterprise and plausibility elevated him there to some notice, and he even succeeded in ingratiating himself with Sir Henry Sydney; but disappointed in some ambitious plan he had formed, he passed over to the continent with his heart filled with aversion to the English government, and hatred to the queen. At Rome these feelings assured him a favourable reception; he was caressed by the Irish ecclesiastics, and by them introduced to his holiness, as a warm and distinguished friend to the Irish Catholic cause. Stukely magnified to the pope the strength and determined spirit of the Catholics in Ireland, and engaged with the aid of three thousand Italians to exterminate the English from the country. By his address and insinuation, he gained great credit with Gregory XIII. and flattered him with the prospect of making his nephew, Buon Compagno, King of Ireland, which he represented as being so certain, that he even accepted the title of Marquis of Leinster from the sovereign elect. The pope delighted with the overture, practised with Spain; Philip listened to the representations of Stukely, desiring to employ him against Elizabeth. A body of eight hundred Italians

was raised for the service, which Philip engaged to pay, and Stukely, their leader, embarked on his adventure, laden with honours by the pope and the Spanish monarch.*

About the same time, there was another fugitive, an Irishman, who threatened the country with invasion, as a tool of the Romanists. This was James Fitz Maurice, whose turbulence had been reduced by Sir John Perrot, but had obtained the queen's pardon, together with the Butlers, brothers of the Duke of Ormond. The haughty and revengeful Fitz Maurice, unmoved by the lenity shown him, had retired to the continent, eager to create new disorders, and to satisfy his deep hatred of Elizabeth. He applied repeatedly to the King of France, representing the invasion of Ireland as easy; but after two years' unsuccessful application, he was dismissed from the French court. He proceeded to Spain, where he was received with more attention. Philip dispatched him to the pope, who was readily prevailed on by Saunders, an English ecclesiastic, and Allen, an Irish priest, to favour the design of an invasion. A bull was prepared, addressed to the prelates, princes, nobles, and people of Ireland, exhorting them by the authority of the holy see to aid and assist Fitz Maurice, for the recovery of their liberty, and the defence of the holy church, and promising to all his adherents the same spiritual indulgences granted to those who fought against the infidels. A banner was solemnly consecrated, and delivered to Fitz Maurice, as a champion of the faith; and as Saunders and Allen both consented to accompany him, the

* Was this Stukely any connection of the infamous individual of the same name who so treacherously betrayed Sir Walter Raleigh?

former was invested with the dignity of legate. Strengthened with the authority and benediction of the holy father, and supplied with money sent by Philip, the *crusaders* were ready for their expedition.

Elizabeth, whose vigilance and that of her ministers never slumbered, was soon informed of these schemes, and took her measures to defeat their accomplishment. But in respect to the first adventurer, Stukely, her apprehensions were soon dispelled; he had embarked, and arrived at the mouth of the Tagus, just at the time of Don Sebastian's romantic expedition against the Moors. On explaining the object of *his* expedition, Stukely was prevailed on by Sebastian to accompany him to Africa, promising on his return to join the Irish expedition. Philip, by this time aware of the self-interested policy of the pope, consented to this diversion of the troops. Stukely and his Italians accompanied the gallant Sebastian, and had the honour of falling with him.

The death of the Portuguese monarch diverted Philip from his design against Elizabeth, to the conquest of Portugal, and the fears of foreign invasion no longer agitated the Irish government. But Philip, though he had relinquished the thought of making a conquest of Ireland, was yet determined to encourage a spirit of rebellion among her subjects. He therefore so far encouraged Fitz Maurice, that he obtained a troop of Spaniards; some English and Irish fugitives joined him also, and in full expectation of the glad co-operation of his countrymen, he embarked his feeble force in three ships, and landed in Kerry, at a bay called Smerwick. The ecclesiastics, Saunders and Allen, solemnly hallowed the place, assuring the invaders of success and victory in the glorious cause of the church. An inauspicious

incident however occurred at the first moment of their enterprise : a ship of war, apprised of their arrival, doubled a point of land, and cut off their transports, thus depriving them of all power of retreat. As their arrival was not unexpected, John and James, brothers of the Earl of Desmond, joined them with their followers. The earl himself, although equally ready, thought it best to act with caution and reserve, and in the meanwhile pretended to assemble his forces for the service of government, even carrying his duplicity so far as to summon the Earl of Clancarthy to his assistance for that avowed purpose ; Clancarthy, however, soon perceived his insincerity, and retired.

The invaders were little satisfied with this dissimulation ; they had expected an open declaration in their favour, and Fitz Maurice could not suppress his feelings at a disappointment so fatal to his cause. The foreigners grew discontented with the coldness and apathy of Desmond, and were impatient for the arrival of that vast concourse of disaffected Irish, which they were assured would immediately join their standard. Fitz Maurice, as well as possible dissembling his mortification and chagrin, persuaded his troops to maintain their station, with firm assurances of being supported, while he himself made a journey to a favourite seat of Irish devotion, called the Holy Cross of Tipperary, in order to perform a vow he had made in Spain. Under this pretence, so calculated to awaken the superstitious reverence of his followers, and to make them patiently await the result of such a meritorious service ; Fitz Maurice politically concealed his design of enticing, by his personal persuasion, the disaffected of Connaught and Ulster to unite with him. But his visit to the shrine was fated

to be the concluding scene of his life. A violent altercation ensued between him and a son of Sir William de Burgho, whom he had endeavoured to win over to rebellion, and in a skirmish which ensued, each fell by the hand of his antagonist. In the mean time, Sir William Drury, the governor, collected as good a force as he was able, and even the deceitful Desmond attended his summons with a well appointed troop; his duplicity, however, was suspected, and he was imprisoned; but making the most solemn protestations of fidelity, he was freed, and retired from the camp, refusing to attend the deputy, although he still continued to profess an attachment to the crown. The Spaniards now found their disappointment of a general rising of the southern provinces, aggravated by the death of their leader. They were cut off from escape by sea, and were to be encountered by the united forces of the state. They had no alternative but to submit to the command of Sir John Desmond. They quitted their station at Smerwick, and adopted the desultory mode of Irish warfare, by which the deputy's forces were obliged to pursue them into their concealed haunts. Many weeks passed in this fatiguing and hazardous service, during which the invaders gained some advantages, and their numbers augmented. The ecclesiastics were assiduously employed in preaching the glorious cause of the church. The pope by a new bull, invested Sir John Desmond with the plenitude of his authority, and renewed his indulgences profusely to all those who should assist the cause. The health of the lord deputy being unequal to the military fatigue, the command of the army was given to Sir Nicholas Malby, who receiving intelligence that the rebels were near Limerick,

determined to attack them. In a plain adjoining an abbey, called Monaster Neva, he found them in array, about two thousand strong, prepared to give him battle. Every expedient had been resorted to, to exalt the enthusiasm of the troops. The papal standard was displayed; and Allen the Irish Jesuit passed solemnly through the ranks, distributing his benedictions, and assuring them of victory in the field, and heaven in reversion. Under the direction of Spanish officers, the dispositions of the troops were made with more regularity than was usual to the Irish, and the attack was vigorous and well maintained. Victory long remained doubtful, but the English at length prevailed. The rebels were routed with considerable slaughter, and among the slain was found the body of Allen, who had drawn the sword in the cause of Rome, as well as exhorted others to fight for it. After a series of base duplicity, to which he appears in some degree to have been instigated by Saunders, and other Romish agents, the infatuated Earl of Desmond avowed his traitorous designs.

To trace the wretchedness which he brought upon himself and his family by his disaffection, and to detail the calamities of the war which his rebellion protracted, is not the plan of our work: it must be sufficient to say, that the cruelties practised and encouraged are horrid in detail, and disgraceful to humanity. Repeated complaints were made to the queen of the rigour practised by Arthur Lord Grey, the governor, and his officers. She was assured that he tyrannised with such barbarity, that little was left in Ireland for her majesty to reign over but ashes and carcases. These representations were followed by an offer of pardon to those rebels who would accept it.

Grey was recalled, and Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, and Sir Henry Wallop, treasurer at war, were appointed lords justices.

As an instance of the severities practised against the Irish at this period, we find O'Sullivan Beare, one of the bravest and noblest chiefs of Kerry, and lord of part of Killarney, in writing to the Spanish minister an account of his sufferings, urges him to the speedy sending of a ship to receive him, his wife, and children, to save him from the hands of their most merciless enemies: "Making choice," he pathetically adds, "rather to forsake my ancient inheritance, friends, followers, and goods, than any way trust to their graceless pardon or promises."

The government of an ecclesiastic seemed rather incompatible with a state of war and commotion, but, in fact, the elements of contention were nearly exhausted. Saunders, the fiery incendiary of the south, completely worn out with the effects of want and toil he had endured, died in a miserable retreat, so solitary and remote, that his remains were not discovered and interred, until they had been mangled by beasts. The end of the desperate and unhappy Desmond was yet more affecting. He had not been received into the granted pardon, although he entreated for mercy, but was hunted from one retreat to another, (it being the great object of the English commanders to seize him.) He was frequently in the most imminent danger of being taken, although disguised among the meanest of his followers, lurking with them in the woods and bogs, and depending upon them for the bare support of nature; one of his captains actually lost his life in endeavouring to support his master. After this in an extreme of necessity, two horsemen and a few huns ventured to seize some cattle for his sub-

sistence. The owner, indignant at the violence, made it known, and a few soldiers of an English garrison engaged to reclaim the booty. They arrived in their pursuit at the opening of a valley in which was a small grove, and fatigued with their chase, they determined to repose in this favourable spot. While doing this, they observed a light at a distance; their leader, Kelly, of Monerta, a man of Irish race, ordered one of his men to advance cautiously to the spot, to find how many of the rebels were posted, (for he concluded the light proceeded from a party of them.) The man obeyed his orders, and discovered it to issue from a miserable hut, in which he discovered six persons; he informed Kelly, who with his party rushed forward, but on entering the hut, found that the rebels had fled at his approach, except one man of venerable aspect, stretched languidly before a few lighted embers. The furious leader assailed and wounded the unarmed man, who exclaimed, "Spare me, for I am the Earl of Desmond." Kelly exultingly smote off his head, and brought it to the Earl of Ormond, by whom it was conveyed to the queen, and impaled on London Bridge. "Thus," says Leland, "was a family extinguished, which had flourished for four centuries in rude splendour and magnificence, and had frequently proved too powerful to be governed." The pride of this last Desmond, inflamed by bigoted ecclesiastics, met its punishment in those distresses in which he involved himself by his insurrection. Without being able to serve the cause he espoused, his misfortunes began with rebellion, and his affecting death closed the scene of his infatuation. His domains were now, of course, forfeited to Elizabeth, to be appropriated by her as should be most expedient for the reformation of her

Irish dominions. Two ecclesiastics, agents of the earl in Spain, arrived with arms and ammunition to support his rebellion, just at the time when the fatal catastrophe occurred. They learnt the sad intelligence and precipitately retired.

We should be happy to be able to say, that the suppression of disorders in Ireland, which gave a fair occasion for regulating the country upon a generous and enlightened policy, was most improved for that purpose, but a cruel and odious jealousy appears to have pervaded the English councils, urging them to oppose every improvement with reference to Ireland. In these ungenerous sentiments, however, Sir Henry Sydney and Sir John Perrot had no part, but on the contrary, considered with just indignation the cruelty of this horrid policy. All, however, concurred in the necessity of an active and prudent government, and Sir John Perrot was appointed. He assumed the administration at a time when the spirit of insurrection seemed extinct, the last remaining rebel of any consequence having retired to Spain.

The first act of his power was the publication of a general amnesty to all who should return to their allegiance. The son of the deceased Earl of Desmond, who had been delivered up to the deputy, he sent to England to be educated so as to render him worthy of any favours the royal bounty might think it right to bestow. Sir John was highly successful in his negotiations with the Irish chieftains, and in promoting the general tranquillity. Such was the activity and intelligence of this able governor, that he formed the most extensive and comprehensive plans for the improvement and reformation of Ireland. But he could not engage either the crown or legisla-

ture of England, to forward his patriotic views. For alarmed by intestine dangers, and apprehensions of foreign invasions, Elizabeth was impatient of her Irish expenses, and instead of augmenting them, expected Ireland to supply her with forces for the Low Countries. Therefore with many common-place commendations of his good services, the active and enlightened deputy was left to the ordinary course of administration.

In 1585, he convened a parliament at Dublin. Among the spiritual lords, were the Bishops of Clogher and Raphoe, two sees which never were bestowed by Elizabeth ; though the fact is trifling, it marks the progress of reformation. Indeed it appears to have been the laudable and generous pride of Sir John Perrot to prevail on the old Irish leaders to exchange their savage state for the condition of English subjects. Accordingly we find among the temporal barons of this parliament the old chieftain of Tirone, Tirlaugh Lynagh. The old man, encumbered in his English costume, expressed with pleasing simplicity his consciousness of being open to ridicule, " Prithee, my lord," he said to the lord deputy, " let my chaplain attend me in his Irish mantle, thus shall your English rabble be diverted from my uncouth figure, and laugh at him." Soon after the prorogation of this parliament, Sir John Perrot received intelligence that schemes were forming by the popish clergy to introduce a foreign army into Ulster, and that an incipient dangerous faction appeared in that district, fomented by the sons of the late John O'Nial, who were preparing to assert their independence of the English government. Perfectly knowing the inconstancy of the Irish, aware how easily their bigotry might be affected by the artful, he immediately marched into Ulster, to prevent the insurrection from sub-

verting the arrangements he had established therein. He succeeded in his intentions, and returned to Dublin to resume his active cares for the settlement and reformation of the kingdom.

But neither merit nor success could guard this patriotic governor from the attacks of malice, envy, and discontent. The attention he invariably gave to the rights of the old native Irish, and to correct those abuses of government that affected them, created a number of secret enemies, and an occasion soon occurred for a display of the latent enmity. The establishment of an university at Dublin was now become a favourite object of government, and Perrot had projected the design of dissolving the cathedral of St. Patrick, and converting its revenues to the proposed plan. But by this measure he kindled the implacable hatred of Loftus, Archbishop of Dublin, and Chancellor of Ireland, whose interest would, of course, be greatly affected by the fulfilment of the design. His enemies represented him in the most false and opprobrious terms to the queen, who too readily gave credence to the calumnies reported. A person was sent from England as a sort of spy upon the conduct of Perrot, and by the instructions which he brought, it was evident that Elizabeth had an unfavourable opinion of the administration of her lord deputy. Mortified at this unworthy idea of him, Perrot wrote to the queen, humbly requesting to be allowed personally to justify his conduct. It does not appear that the queen complied, but he remained in his government, which he continued to administer with fidelity and zeal. Elizabeth renewed her favourite scheme of re-peopling Munster with an English colony; and every enticement was offered, and many English gentlemen of distinction received grants of different portions, but

those grants, by the injudicious and in many instances unjust modes of settlement, contributed to the subsequent disorders into which the kingdom was plunged, rather than served to tranquillize and settle it.

The rebellion of the de Burghos soon after followed, occasioned by the endeavours of Sir John Bingham, to repress the tyranny of the haughty chiefs over their vassals. The great Irish lords, although they formally acknowledged an allegiance to the crown, were still proudly conscious of their ancient independence, and upon the least appearance of weakness in the government, were ready to prove their abhorrence of it. The turbulence of their spirits, and the animation of their hopes were incessantly augmented by the popish ecclesiastics, who at this period, more especially elevated their expectations by intelligence of the vast and terrible preparations of Spain, to annihilate England by an irresistible invasion, and they were encouraged to regard Philip as their patron and deliverer, should they hold themselves ready for the fair occasion of asserting the glorious cause of religion, and their own emancipation, from the bondage of heretics. Among these great lords, Hugh O'Nial, nephew of Shane O'Nial, had acquired weight and consequence by the favours he had received from government. He had entered early into the service of the English, and possessed a vigour of constitution which well fitted him for a military life. In the rebellion of Desmond, he had acquired honour by his activity and valour. By his constant intercourse with the English, he had added a great degree of polish to a temper and manners naturally subtile and insinuating, a refinement he well dissembled before his own people, but which he as well knew how to bring into play when it favoured his designs.

He had petitioned that by virtue of the grant to his grandfather, Earl Conn, he might be admitted to the place and title of Earl of Tirowen, as well as the annexed inheritance. He so far prevailed by his insinuating manners with Sir John Perrot that he sent him into England; that he might himself prefer his petition to the queen. There is an intuitive penetration possessed by some individuals which admirably aids their designs and views. It would appear that O'Nial was fully imbued with this acuteness, combined with his accommodating spirit which fitted itself with facility to the "times that be." All his powers of obsequiousness and flattery were lavished on the maiden queen, whose vanity he raised, so as to sun into vigour the hopes he had formed. With a well feigned ingenuousness, he lamented the unnatural reluctance of his countrymen to order and civility, their national prepossessions, and concluded many similar arguments, by imploring her majesty to take effectual measures for suppressing the name of O'Nial as the most essential step to break the prejudices of those of his own district, and opening to them the blessings of English laws and English manners. His artifice entirely succeeded even with the acute Elizabeth, so apt is vanity to cloud the most correct judgment. She granted to the insinuating petitioner the earldom and the inheritance annexed to it, without any reservation of rent. Hugh returned triumphantly to Ireland. In Tirowen he was regarded as a high favourite of Elizabeth, as he took care to recount the graces he had received, well aware, that in the eyes of his rude followers the circumstance would highly exalt him. Government found it necessary to look to him for assistance against the disaffected of his province, and he, under the fair semblance of at-

tachment to the crown, well knew how to increase his power and consequence. He insidiously proposed to keep six companies constantly in readiness to encounter any insurgents who might disturb the northern provinces. His proposal was in full faith of his loyalty accepted, and by artfully changing these men, he soon trained to arms a considerable force, while at the same time under pretence of building a mansion, he collected a great quantity of lead in readiness for military service. In the mean time, on the defeat of the Spanish armada seventeen ships containing a force of upward of four thousand men were driven on the coasts of Ireland. They were received by the Irish as allies and kinsmen. The Spaniards on their part listened with interest to the account of their hospitable entertainers of their oppressions, and desire to throw off the English yoke. They were encouraged in these sentiments of independence, the greatness and goodness of the Spanish monarch was dilated upon, and above all his unwearied zeal in the Catholic cause, which united him in the bonds of fraternal affection to all true sons of the holy church. From him, it was added, the faithful Irish catholics might be assured of receiving protection and support, and they were exhorted to persevere in their laudable disaffection to an heretical government.

The Earl of Tirowen was suspected of having entered into a formal treaty with the Spaniards, and concerting dangerous schemes for effecting a future invasion. These suspicions were in a degree confirmed by subsequent reports conveyed to the lord deputy, that treasures and stores of various kinds had been brought by the Spaniards into Ireland, and were secreted in the places where they had been received. Fitzwilliam the then governor, issued a commission for searching

and securing this treasure for the queen, his commission proved ineffectual, as did his individual search, no treasure was to be found, but it was represented that the father-in-law of the Earl of Tirowen, and Sir John O'Dougherty had possessed themselves of it. Fitzwilliam had them seized, and without any proof they were committed to the castle of Dublin; the first was not enlarged till the severities of his confinement reduced him to the verge of the grave, the other, after a lapse of two years, purchased his emancipation by a considerable douceur. This ill-judged and arbitrary exercise of power towards two individuals who were well affected to government, who had rendered it much service, and were revered by their countrymen, created a great sensation and much dissatisfaction. Many of the disaffected became more inveterate, while those that had submitted repented having done so.

The Earl of Tirowen, whose consciousness might increase his alarm, determined to withdraw himself from the apprehended violence of Fitzwilliam, and with his usual affectation of loyalty and submission, hastened to cast himself at the feet of Elizabeth to renew his assurances of fidelity. As he had departed without licence from the deputy, his liberty was for a time restrained but his humble submissions soon obtained for him the royal pardon, and he was admitted before the privy council to give such assurances of his future loyalty as should be demanded. Among the numerous articles to which he agreed, were "to hold no correspondence with foreign traitors, to maintain no monks nor friars, not to meddle with spiritual livings." He readily acquiesced in these and a number of other restraints, and the Earl of Ormond and Sir Christopher Hatton were his sureties for the performance. This accommo-

dation was scarcely effected, when the sons of John O'Nial envying the power of Tirowen, boldly attempted to effect his ruin. One of these chiefs repaired to the court of Elizabeth, and there charged the earl with traitorous designs, and with having entered into secret negotiations with Spain. Tirowen affected to treat these accusations with contempt, referring them artfully to the revenge of his accuser, observing that it was natural that he who had advised the total suppression of the name of O'Nial should never be forgiven by that haughty sept. The accuser was neglected in consequence of this artful insinuation, and Tirowen permitted to return to Ireland. Here he artfully evaded the execution of his indentures, pleading that as the neighbouring lords were engaged in them equally with himself, he was ready when they were to fulfil his engagements, but for him to execute them while they continued free, would only expose himself to their depredations, and deprive him of the power of defence. Actuated by that restless spirit which urged him to every mode whereby the English government might be weakened and overturned, this insidious chieftain secretly fomented the discontents of several septs, while with his usual duplicity he professed the greatest attachment to the queen's authority, and to give his professions a greater air of sincerity even admitted his country to be formed into a shire and divided into baronies after the English model, and for a time some degree of tranquillity existed in the country. This period was distinguished by an event which was fraught with salutary consequences to Ireland, opening to it a source of refinement and civility, bringing it in some degree upon a level with other nations in intellectual acquirements and improvements. It was the foundation of the University of Dublin.

So early as 1311, an attempt to establish an academical society had been made by an archbishop of Dublin, who had procured a bull from Rome for the erection of a university, but the plan ended with the life of the projector. We have already adverted to a similar attempt made by Archbishop Bricknor in the reign of Edward the second, which was supported with great difficulty for the term of thirty-eight years. In the reign of Edward the fourth, it was enacted by an Irish parliament, [1465.] that a university should be erected at Drogheda, but this act like many others of the Irish legislature became a dead letter, being totally disregarded in the tumult of civil war. From the very infancy of the reformation so great was the difficulty of finding pastors, so supine the negligence of the governors in regard to religious affairs, and so determined the opposition against any attempt to provide for the instruction of the people, and the establishment of the reformed faith and worship, that the church of Ireland was gradually reduced almost to a state of desolation. Under these circumstances, men who seriously and sincerely desired the good of their country, so essentially connected with the well being of the church, could not but direct their thoughts towards the most effectual means of remedying so great an evil. It is obvious, that to render the streams salutary, the fountain must be purified, it was also necessary that those who thirsted should not be far from the waters of refreshment; but to quit metaphor, the most effectual and natural means of disseminating and providing for national instruction, was certainly to qualify some of the inhabitants to become ministers of the gospel, so as not to depend upon the precarious supply from other countries. Every one who thought upon the subject, and it

was a period of thought and examination in theological subjects, felt the conviction that the spiritual wants of Ireland were great and pressing, calling for special provision and assistance, and that the only adequate and appropriate provision for the supply of the remedies for the diseased moral sense of the community, was the establishment of an institution on the spot in which natives might be prepared for the important work of the ministry, among a population deeply tainted with the false principles of religion. In proportion as the English power became more extended and more firmly grounded in Ireland, these necessities became apparent, to which the impulse which had been given to the thinking faculties of mankind of course gave additional force. In the parliament of 1569, it was moved to re-establish the university once erected in the church of St. Patrick, and to support it by voluntary contributions. Sir Henry Sydney who was a man of exemplary piety, and sincerely zealous for the reformation, greatly favoured the design, and offered ample assistance, but either from the public disorders then existing, or the want of funds, the design was not prosecuted. The patriotic and enterprising Sir John Perrot was the promoter of the next attempt. It was his purpose to erect two colleges both in Dublin, on the dissolution of the cathedral of St. Patrick. He proposed to convert the building into courts of law, and to appropriate part of the annual revenues as an endowment for each seminary, the residue to be employed in reparation of the church, or augmentation of the revenues of the other cathedral. This scheme was violently opposed by Loftus archbishop of Dublin, whose interests it too nearly affected. Two high spirits thus encountering each other, produced a bitter animosity, but the

prelate determined to prove that although he disapproved the particular scheme of Perrot, yet that he was a zealous friend to the establishment of a seminary of learning in the kingdom, suggested that the monastery of All Hallows would be a proper situation for the purpose. This monastery had been erected by Dermot Mac Murchad, king of Leinster, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, and on the dissolution of religious houses, the scite had been vested in the mayor and citizens of Dublin. When therefore Perrot was recalled from his government, the prelate applied himself to these proprietors with zeal and assiduity. In two elaborate speeches he informed them it was the queen's gracious intention to erect a university of good literature in Ireland, he expatiated eloquently on the high advantages they could not fail to derive from such an institution in their vicinity, and exhorted them to grant the ground for the laudable purpose. "An act," added the prelate, "of good acceptance with God, of great reward hereafter, and of honour and advantage to yourselves, and more to your learned offspring in the future, where by the help of learning, they may build your families some stories higher than they are by their advancement either in the church or commonwealth." The prelate certainly proved his knowledge of human nature in thus bringing to his aid that ambition so natural to parents; that their offspring should be eminent. Men who have raised themselves either by genius or industry to a state of opulence, seldom desire that their sons should tread the same path, but that they should be provided with distinguished situations in the state, the church, or in the army, and under the fair plea of duty to provide for their children, eagerly embrace the most remote means of pushing their fortunes. Whether the good

citizens of Dublin shared in these parental prospects of eminence for their children or not, it is immaterial to ascertain, suffice it to say the archbishop's eloquence prevailed, the proposal was embraced, and the monastery with its precincts freely granted. Elizabeth was then solicited for her royal charter, and a mortmain licence for the land granted by the city. The two agents of this solicitation were Henry Usher, and Lucas Challoner, destined to be members of the new institution. They soon returned with a warrant for a licence to pass the seals, dated December 29, 1591, for the incorporation of an university, with a power of holding the granted lands, and others that might be obtained to the amount of four hundred pounds annual value. This was succeeded by a regular charter, by which the college was erected as mother of a university, by the style of the college of the Holy and Undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin, to consist of a provost, (Adam Loftus, archbishop of Dublin,) three fellows in the name of more, three scholars also in the name of more, Cecil Lord Burleigh was named in the charter first chancellor, and all future elections to this office vested in the provost and fellows. The fellows were empowered to elect their provost, who was to hold his station for seven years only; and it was provided that the society was to be visited by the Archbishop of Dublin, Bishop of Meath, vice treasurer, treasurer at war, chief justice and mayor of Dublin. A fund was now to be provided for buildings and other charges attending this infant society. Accordingly, March, 1591, the lord deputy Fitzwilliam and the privy council, issued a circular to the principal gentlemen of every barony in the kingdom soliciting their aid, and although the design had to struggle with the po-

verty of the kingdom, and the great reluctance of the popish party, yet the first stone of the buildings was speedily laid, and in January, 1593, the students were admitted.

The oppressions of the times and the frustration of its grants by the wars of Ulster, threatened the dissolution of the institution. It languished in weakness for some time, but by the bounty and care of its royal patroness, and some efficient friends, it was at length enabled to strike its roots securely amidst the storms that assailed it, and in time rose into consequence and splendour.* Having thus noticed the formation of the cradle of Irish literature, and her ecclesiastic

* This college is a most beautiful structure, consisting of two spacious squares, the first of which contains the refectory, the old hall and chapel, and the new theatre for lectures and examinations. The front of two of these buildings is finely decorated with Corinthian columns, supporting pediments; and over the front of the old hall, on the east side of this square rises a handsome steeple crowned with a cupola. In the other square, which consists principally of brick buildings for the students, there is a superb library extending through its whole length on the south side; behind this square there is a walled park. The west side of the first square, which is built with Portland stone, forms the grand front, three hundred feet in length, ornamented with Corinthian pillars, and other decorations, in very fine

taste. At a small distance to the south side of this front is an elegant edifice, where the provost resides. The printing office is a neat structure on the north side of the park; opposite to it is the anatomy house. The college of Dublin is an university in itself, consisting of a provost, vice-provost, seven senior, and fifteen junior fellows, and seventeen scholars of the house. The number of students is generally about four hundred. It has also professors in divinity, common and civil law, physic, Greek, modern languages, mathematics, oriental languages, history and oratory, modern history, natural philosophy, anatomy and surgery, chemistry and botany. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester is chancellor, the Lord Primate of Ireland vice-chancellor.

children, we return to the general retrospect of affairs, as they are more or less connected with the ecclesiastic polity of the country. Although the disaffection and turbulence of the Irish lords certainly received a great accession, from being mingled with the bigotry sedulously cherished by Romish emissaries, it is not our intention to dwell upon the acts of violence and revolt they occasioned, or to follow the insidious Tirowen through the mazes of his wily policy, ere he threw off the mask he had so long effectually worn, and thereby deceived even the penetrating Elizabeth. But as his actions greatly affected the general weal of his country, in which was necessarily involved her ecclesiastical progress and state, it is necessary to take a cursory view of them. Cautiously as he had hitherto avoided any premature disclosure of his real sentiments respecting the English government, a period now approached when his interest and security obliged him no longer to dissemble, and Elizabeth was to prove that all her cares to attach him permanently to her interest were abortive. The old chief Tirlaugh, who had so long enjoyed the Irish chieftainry of Tirowen by permission of the state, was approaching to the period of his dissolution. The wily and ambitious Earl was perfectly aware of the importance attached to the succeeding to a title, commanding an habitual reverence and obedience in his country. The sons of John O'Nial, who had been confined in the castle of Dublin, but had effected their escape, were the only rivals to this desired title. He rested not till he secured them in his power; and on the death of the aged chieftain, he assumed the important title of the O'Nial, although it will be recollected that he had solemnly abjured it, and advised its total suppression. With the plausibility which had ever marked his

conduct, he was at no loss for pretences to palliate the daring outrage he had committed, and his own perfidy. He artfully pleaded that he had possessed himself of the chieftainry, to prevent its being assumed by some other of his sept less favourably disposed to the English government than himself, declaring himself ready to resign it whenever a regular course of law and polity should be established in his territory. The government was in too feeble a state to call in question his sincerity, or to refuse admittance to his pleas. Trusting to the oft experienced influence of his deceitful oaths and professions with an affected confidence in the English, he put himself in the power of Sir William Russel, who in 1594, was appointed governor. Russel totally unacquainted with his character, was beguiled by his apparent warmth and sincerity, and contrary to the advice and assurances of his dangerous influence given by Sir Henry Bagnal who knew him better than the new governor, the latter dismissed him, to the utter dissatisfaction of the queen's ministers.

Commotions now filled the north, of which Tirowen was believed to be the secret spring. Determined no longer to rely on the lenity and inexperience of a government he hated and despised, Tirowen now resolved to rise into open rebellion. He entered into correspondence with Spain, and having united all the Irish chieftains in dependance on himself, he justly began to be regarded as a formidable enemy. Thus for years he persevered in a resistance to the government, which the most strenuous and indefatigable efforts of the civil and military governors were inadequate to overcome. Sir John Norris, as eminent for military talent as for the liberality of his sentiments, and the conciliating dispositions of his heart, found it necessary to grant terms to the

rebel, whom he would gladly have brought in bonds to the footstool of his sovereign, whose favours had been so ungratefully and perfidiously requited. At a period when fortune appeared unfavourable to his cause, and his Spanish succours did not appear, Tirowen wrote letters of penitence and submission to the queen, and also the most pathetic addresses to Sir John Norris, lamenting that the cruelty and injustice he had suffered had driven him to extremities, and expressing the most ardent wishes to return to peace and allegiance. So effectually did he plead his own cause, that the queen empowered her officers to grant pardon to all rebels who should with due humility seek her royal mercy. A congress was appointed at Dundalk, where Tirowen renewed his professions, imploring the queen's pardon, (as he expressed it,) "upon the knees of his heart." Other great concessions followed, and peace seemed again in prospect, when the perfidious Tirowen once more plunged into anarchy and revolt, making it appear that his duplicity had been merely to gain time, and to divert his enemies from immediate hostile steps. The hopes of the insurgents were animated, and their submissions entirely forgotten, when three pinnacles from Spain arrived on the northern coasts, with stores, ammunition, and letters from Philip to the Irish chieftains, exhorting them to persevere in their laudable opposition to the heretical English power, and assuring them of immediate support. The turbulent and proud Irish, elated with this intelligence, reproached themselves for their recent concessions, and in proportion to their sense of weakness, felt their present resolutions of opposition increased and invigorated. They quickly circulated the intelligence with eagerness and triumph through

their different septs, and grew impatient of some pretext to violate their treaty. Tirowen, with his accustomed dissimulation, affected to transmit his letter to the lord deputy and council, to demonstrate the sincerity of his submission, but at the very same time he sent his assurances of a speedy invasion to the chieftain O'Birne, and principal insurgents of Leinster, as well as the disaffected in Munster, all of whom were exhorted to assume arms, and unite with their northern countrymen, *for the assistance of Christ's Catholic religion*. Thus this warfare may be regarded, ostensibly at least, a religious one, whatever were the secret and various motives of the promoters of, and actors in it.

For several years the war was protracted by Tirowen's artifices, and the credulity of government; he alternately aggressing and submitting, and the queen listening and pardoning, because she was averse to the expense requisite to make the effectual resistance to the wily rebel.

Sir John Norris at length found that he had been deceived by treacherous promises, and that the Irish field of warfare was not one in which he could either display his military genius, or perform any thing consistent with his ancient reputation. He was further disgusted by being removed from a government, the duties of which he had faithfully fulfilled. Disappointment preyed on the sensibility of this gallant leader and admirable man; and within two months after his removal from his power, he died without apparent malady, one of the many victims to disappointed hopes, and the vicissitudes of state favour.

Lord Burgh, possessing great military abilities, succeeded with full powers civil and military. He determined to admit no conferences, nor listen to any concessions of the insurgents, but resolved

to prosecute them vigorously. He proceeded without delay to do so, and experienced the obstinate resistance of the enemy. He still, however, persevered; but all military operations were suspended by his sudden death. The council on this event committed the government to Sir Thomas Norris, lord president of Munster; but at his own request the queen immediately appointed a new administration. The chief government was committed to Loftus, primate of Dublin, and chancellor; and such was the vigour which the new government evinced, that Tirowen resolved to recur to his former artifices to gain time. He recounted a long list of grievances to palliate his conduct, and in consequence a truce of eight weeks was agreed upon, in order that an opportunity might be given to all to state their complaints, that they might be transmitted to the royal consideration.

In perusing the recital of these pusillanimous concessions to this arch rebel, we are astonished and disgusted at the weakness of the English government, and their blind credulity, in suffering themselves to believe that faith and sincerity existed in the bosom of Tirowen, or to expect that he was guided by any principle of honour with a government which he abhorred, and roused as was his haughty spirit with the elevating idea of being the deliverer of his country, and the patron of Irish liberty. He doubtless considered his very perfidiousness and art as meritorious, and as entitling him to the gratitude and reverence of his country. By his artifices he procured his pardon, and even dictated the terms upon which he would accept it. But having by the readiness of his enemies to yield to his pleas, discovered their weakness, he resolved without delay to re-commence hostilities, without paying

the slightest regard to the promises he had solemnly made, the treaties he had entered into, or the submissions he had yielded, which, with the true policy of a barbarian, he considered as mere temporary expedients, perfectly justifiable in a state of warfare. Indeed, situated as was this Irish chieftain, it would be absurd to expect in him a lively moral sense; we must not judge him by the refined notions of the nineteenth century, although we may abhor his perfidy, and regard with contempt the weakness which gave him so many opportunities of practising it.

Sir Henry Bagnal, who had succeeded Sir John Norris in the military command, was directed to relieve the fort of Blackwater, which Tirowen had invested with a determination to reduce by famine. Bagnal in his advance was surrounded in disadvantageous ground, and his soldiers, dismayed by an accidental explosion of gunpowder, were put to flight; this disorder was immediately succeeded by the death of Bagnal, who in raising his beaver received a fatal shot in the forehead. The pursuit was arrested by Montacute, who commanded the English horse. Fifteen hundred of the royal army, however, with thirteen gallant officers, and the general, were the victims of the day. The triumph of the rebels was complete, for they became masters of all the artillery, ammunition, and provisions of the royal army, as well as a quantity of arms. The fort of Blackwater was immediately surrendered, and the remnant of the royalists, who had fled to Armagh, were soon obliged, by the victorious insurgents, to evacuate that city. In this encounter, the generals on each side were inflamed with a mortal enmity against each other; for Bagnal had always opposed Tirowen, and endeavoured to open the eyes of others to his de-

ceit and perfidy, of which he was perfectly aware. The superstitious Irish were also on this occasion excited to the highest religious frenzy by their priests, who assured them, on the faith of some old prophecies, that the day would prove fatal to heresy. The assault was violent in proportion to the high-wrought zeal thus artfully inspired.

We are not to measure the importance of this victory by the standard of modern conquests; situated as Ireland then was, it was great and momentous; it excited the full fury of rebellion, and urged even hitherto passive septs to defiance of the English government. [1598.] The flame of insurrection spread from north to south—the rebels every where committed with impunity the most desperate outrages, particularly on the English settlers, who fled, or became victims to the vindictive hatred of their semi-barbarous enemies.

The state of the country was now indeed deplorable. The whole province of Ulster was in open rebellion under Tirowen, and the other parts of the country ready to unite in the revolt, when aided by expected succours from the pope and Spain, and in the mean time were reduced nearly to a state of despair by innumerable oppressions, and by the rumour of meditated severities of the English government, which the country was prepared to oppose in the most obstinate manner.

The English council were become sensible that the rebellion had now attained height and strength, which imperiously demanded the promptest and most decisive measures to reduce and weaken, and were sensible that the many temporizing plans which had hitherto guided their policy, served only to encourage the spirit of insurrection, and to augment rather than allay disorder. It was

therefore resolved to push the war vigorously. They were probably further urged to these decisive measures, by the intelligence that Philip of Spain was preparing for a powerful invasion of the dominions of Elizabeth, twelve thousand men being destined to assist the rebel forces in Ireland. The most popular lord in England, and the highest in the queen's grace at this momentous period, was Lord Essex. On the deliberations respecting Ireland, Elizabeth had proposed to commit the government to Blount, Lord Mountjoy, but Essex opposed this nomination, representing Mountjoy too little acquainted with military service for such an appointment, at such a period. In fact, in describing a fit person for so high and important a service, he so distinctly traced out his own character that the likeness could not be mistaken, and both his friends and enemies concurred in rendering his apparent wishes effectual, for by the united instances of all, he accepted the government of Ireland. His patent was granted with the title of lord lieutenant, and with the most extensive powers, and he was furnished with an army of twenty thousand men, greatly superior to any heretofore sent to Ireland.

We cannot follow the open-hearted Essex in all the details of his government; the faults he committed were those natural to a generous, unsuspecting, and indiscreet character, and he had deeply artful insidious enemies to encounter in the cabinet, as well as determined, irritated, and powerful foes in the field. The insurgents, nothing dismayed by the great preparations against them, rather rejoiced in the opportunity it gave them of confirming the inveteracy of the bigoted and disaffected, and to persuade the wavering that their very existence depended upon their union

in the approaching crisis. Amongst the arguments used to promote this union and resistance, were those of having "their consciences enslaved," and that "their religion was and ought to be the common cause of all." Tirowen was indefatigable in confirming his adherents, and defeating every attempt to seduce them. Every instance of ill-fortune and impolitic conduct of the ardent Essex in his difficult situation, was eagerly reported at the English court, and received with delight by those who had envied him the royal favour. His letters to the queen held a different language to that which his inexperience and rash judgment had dictated in England respecting Irish affairs. In these his dispatches he expatiated on the superiority and even discipline of the enemy, represented the disaffection as general, arising from an utter aversion both from the *religion* and government of England. He also broadly hinted, that it would be most expedient to break the power of the rebels by secret practices, rather than by open opposition, urged the absolute necessity of exterminating their priests, as the chief agents in fomenting disorders, and cementing the rebel interests, recommending it strongly to his royal mistress, if she would form a strong party among the Irish, to hide carefully from them every purpose of establishing among them English government, until their strength should be gradually completely broken. He concluded by pointing out on the other side the royal advantages, and his assurances of ultimate victory, although it must be a work of time, expense, and care.

We must refer our readers to other histories to trace the vicissitudes in the life of the unfortunate Essex, both during his government and unguarded conduct in Ireland, as well as subsequent to his

rash and precipitate return to the presence of his indignant sovereign; and at once hasten to mark the effect of his departure on the disorders of the country he had quitted. Tirowen, who felt his pride flattered, and his consequence increased, by having been admitted to a conference with the royal general, and obtaining from him favourable terms of accommodation, and above all, time, now extended his views, and indefatigably pressed forward in what he judged his honourable career. Essex had scarcely returned to England, when fresh supplies of money and ammunition arrived from Spain, attended with reiterated assurances that the northern Irish might expect a powerful reinforcement from a monarch greatly interested in their honourable struggle, to throw off the heretical dominion which enslaved them. Don Matteo Oviedo, a Spanish ecclesiastic, on whom the pope had conferred the title of Archbishop of Dublin, accompanied these supplies, and was also the bearer of a present from the pontiff to the Prince of Ulster, (so Tirowen was designated,) of a hallowed plume, which the holy father declared to be formed of the feathers of a phoenix, and bestowed as a token of the paternal affection and sincere reverence of the pontiff for the Irish champion of the most holy faith. It is difficult for us to appreciate aright the powerful influence of such a gift upon a character like that of Tirowen, and the eagerness with which he would convert the reverence it obtained for him among his rude followers, to the furtherance of his own lofty designs. Elevated to the utmost height of pride and popularity, by this flattering evidence of papal favour and attention, the haughty chieftain openly assumed the high-sounding title bestowed upon him by the holy father. As the champion of the holy faith, in full confidence of

the success it would insure him, he re-commenced hostilities soon after the expiration of the six weeks agreed upon for the period of a truce, but of which he ought to have given fourteen days' notice previous to the infraction. Finding, however, the lord lieutenant proceeding against him, he thought it politic to parley, and after some menaces retorted with due spirit, a cessation was agreed upon for the period of a month. In this interval, Tirowen published a manifesto addressed to his countrymen, exhorting them to forsake the shameful cause of heresy, which they had so long abetted, or at least not opposed, urging them to assume arms in defence of liberty and their country, and chiefly the Catholic religion, which was so precious and dear to him as its champion, that no narrow and personal dangers should induce him to abandon its sacred interests. In order to impress the people with an idea of his exalted piety, this deep politician made a pilgrimage to the Holy Cross of Tipperary, availing himself of the opportunity of concerting measures with his southern associates. Among these associates was the titular Earl of Desmond, who addressed a letter to the monarch of Spain, inveighing in violent terms against the tyranny of Elizabeth, boasting of his own meritorious services and gallant exploits, in exterminating the English settlers from the southern province, and praying to be furnished with men and ammunition, that he might invest and reduce those places where the enemies of the church had taken refuge. Another letter, bearing the signature of Tirowen, or rather O'Nial, Desmond, Macarthy-More, and Dermond-Macarthy, was addressed to Pope Clement, evidently dictated by an ecclesiastic. In terms of high-wrought zeal and piety they profess to prostrate themselves before the *father of spirits upon*

earth, imploring his compassionate relief for his spiritual sons, so as to enable them to subdue those who are enemies to their *Sion*, and oppose the building of the walls of their *Jerusalem*. They earnestly solicit the holy father to provide pious and learned pastors for their afflicted church, whom they faithfully promise to cherish and protect, and they earnestly beseech him to renew the sentence of excommunication fulminated by his predecessors against the heretical Elizabeth, which would enable them *his* faithful subjects to act with greater success in defence of *his* kingdom of Ireland. In answer to this application, the pope published a bull, whereby he granted to Prince Hugh O’Nial, his confederates and assistants, the same spiritual indulgences usually conferred on the crusaders. The manifesto of Tir-owen was, probably, as well as the above letter, manufactured at Rome or in Spain, both are evidences of the spirit which had been infused into the insurgents, and how artfully the flame was kept alive by a constant recurrence to those oppressions which had at first aroused the spirit of discontent and resistance. We shall give a few extracts from this singular composition, supposed to emanate from the Irish champion of the most holy faith, whose crafty policy and duplicity may be traced in many passages of it, indicating that he, at least, was a party in its composition or revision.

The manifesto opens with a declaration, that the chieftain had shown great favour and forbearance towards his countrymen, not only because they were professors of the Catholic faith, but also in the hope that they would voluntarily take into consideration the lamentable state of their poor country, and of their own gentle consciences, in maintaining, relieving, and helping the enemies

of God and our country, in wars infallibly tending to the promotion of heresie. It proceeds to say, "That seeing that you are so obstinate, in that which you have hitherto continued of necessitie, I must use séveritie towards you, who otherwise I most entirely loved, in reclayming you by compulsion, when my long tolerance, and happy victories, by God's particular favour doubtlessly obtained, could work no alteration in your consciences." It goes on to state, that "by persevering in that damnable estate in which ye have lived, great calamitie and miserie must ensue, of which they are forewarned, and that unless everie of you come and joyne with me against the enemies of God and our poor country, I will use meanes not only to spoil your goods, but to dispossess you of your lands. But and if you shall joyne with me, upon my conscience, and as I shall answer for it before God, I will employ myself to the utmost of my power in their defence, and for the extirpation of heresie, the planting of the Catholic religion, the delivery of our country from infinite murders, wicked and detestable policies, by which this kingdom was hitherto governed, nourished in obscurity and ignorance, maintained in barbarity and incivility, and consequently of infinite evils, which are too lamentable to be rehearsed." This too faithful picture of the state of the country is followed by the protestation: "Seeing there are motives most laudable before any man of consideration, and before the Almighty most meritorious, which is chiefly to be respected, I thought myself in conscience bound, Seeing God has given me some power, to use all means for the reduction of this our poor afflicted country into the Catholic faith, which can never be brought to any good pass, without your destruction or helping hands." He then

professes his disinterestedness, that he desires no secular advantages, and adds, "giving you to understand upon my salvation, that chiefly and principally I fight for the Catholic faith, to be planted throughout our poor country, as manifestly might appear, by that I rejected all other conditions preferred to me, this not being granted ; which eftsoone before by word of mouth I have protested, and do hereby protest, that if I had gotten to be King of Ireland, without having the Catholic religion, which before I have mentioned, I would not the same accept."

The following clauses are particularly characteristic of this plausible chieftain: "Yet some other, very catholickly given, to cover their bad consciences with cloaks of affected ignorance, will not seem to understand my good meaning therein, but according to their own corrupt consciences and judgement, construe my warres to be for my particularities, affirming that I never mentioned any points of religion in any article of agreement which was to passe between the queen's governors and me." He endeavours to destroy the prejudice this reserve had excited, by saying he was altogether guided by a wise policy, dictated by peculiar circumstances of the times. "Albeit," he says, "the same was not then manifested, because so good a cause should not be committed to so doubtful an entertainment as my power then was likely to afford ; and least a Catholic cause should receive any disgrace, or should be scandalized by heretics, I refrained myself from giving others to understand my intentions." The document proceeds to deny that any allegiance is due to Elizabeth, she being under sentence of excommunication: "It is a thing void of all reason that his holyness should

revoke the sentence, she persevering in heresie, yea, in mischieving and persecuting the Catholics."

A repetition of entreaty to unite for the cause of religion then occurs, the example of France being cited as encouragement for perseverance, as the manifesto concludes with the clause: "As for myself, I protest before God and upon my salvation, I have been preferred oftentimes such conditions as no man, seeking his own private commoditie, could refuse; but I, seeking the public utilitie of my native country, and means for your salvation, will prosecute these warres untill that generally religion be planted throughout all Ireland. So I rest, praying the Almighty to move your flinted hearts, to prefer the commoditie and profit of our country before your own private ease."

"O'NEALE."

"*Duncveag, the fifteenth day of November, 1599.*"
E. MSS. Epis. Strone. Bibl. Trin. Coll. Dub.

It is evident from these documents how diligent the chiefs of the insurgents were to alienate the people from their allegiance to the queen, and to re-light the torch of war. The royalist army and government were too weak not to regard the preparations with apprehension, particularly as two of their ablest officers were prematurely cut off in some petty encounter with the insurgents. To act on the defensive for awhile was their only course, while the English ministry were earnestly solicited that some effectual means of protection might be afforded ere the rebels made good their evident intention of invading the pale, in which case ruin must ensue to the English.

CHAPTER XIII.

English power in Ireland reduced—Queen's authority condemned—Tirowen's activity—Mountjoy appointed deputy—His proceedings—Infuses spirit into the queen's authorities—Fickleness of the Irish—Tirowen's reputation diminishes—Distress and devastation attending the state of warfare—Ireland, a cause of anxiety to Elizabeth—Impolitic measure—Proceedings of Mountjoy—His sentiments—Insurgents encouraged by prospect of Spanish aid—Diligence of the ecclesiastics—Some chiefs sent to England—Arrival of Spaniards under d'Aquilla—Instigates the Irish to revolt—Mountjoy acts with determination—Spaniards reduced to difficulties—Disgust of Tirowen—Spirit of disaffection kept alive—Extreme distress of the country—Proceedings of Mountjoy—Tirowen makes overtures—They are listened to—His abject submission—Promised pardon—Death of Elizabeth—Tirowen's behaviour—Restoration of tranquillity—Spirit of party—Hypocrisy of Tirowen—Romish power diminishing—Artful suggestions of the Romanists—Their success in forming a strong party—On the accession of James it begins to manifest itself openly.

WHILE the English power in Ireland was thus reduced, and the queen's authority contemned, Tirowen continued his activity in confirming his associates, carrying on his foreign correspondence, daily increasing his forces, and rising in pride and confidence. The rebel cause being secretly favoured by some who appeared outwardly best affected to the state. Elizabeth, whose parsimony could ill brook the expenses of the Irish disorders, in order to arrest the progress of the rebellion, returned to her former intention of appointing Mountjoy, lord deputy, and although she found him reluctant, she obliged him to accept the employ-

ment. Without any parade he arrived at Dublin, February, 1599. The refinement of manner which distinguished this nobleman was regarded with contempt as effeminacy by the rude Irish, and Tirowen could not conceal his contemptuous exultation in a choice, appearing so injudicious, of a commander, who he said "would lose the season of action while the breakfast was prepared." But this penetrating chieftain was for once at least deceived by his own vanity. Mountjoy found indeed the country in a desperate condition, but his native capacity and vigour dictated to him the best measures to pursue, not discouraged by the pride, the power and the popularity of Tirowen, he immediately marched against him in Ulster, penetrating into the heart of the province, the chief seat of the rebels. He fortified Derry and Mount Norris, in order to stem the Irish, and following their own mode of warfare, he chased them to their haunts, obliging them to take refuge in the most remote woods. With a similar success as followed his own plans, he employed Sir George Carew in Munster, and by his persevering vigour, he infused new life into the queen's authority throughout the country. The power and consequence of Tirowen, like those of all similar characters, guided by similar motives, and directed to similar views, depended greatly upon opinion, which remained buoyant on the stream of success, but sunk when opposing obstacles arrested its onward course. The partial defeats of their chief, immediately proved the fickleness of the Irish, they deserted in great numbers, and some of their principal partizans even applied to the lord deputy for pardon and protection. So wisely and successfully did Mountjoy prosecute his military operations, that every attempt of Tirowen was repelled by his vigour and his pru-

dence, so that the reputation of this idol of his country, this champion of her faith daily diminished, his followers continually escaping from the miseries of warfare under his banners, to sue the government for protection and pardon. The distresses and far spreading devastation attending this state of warfare, are dreadful in the recital and we may rejoice that our subject does not necessarily oblige us to narrate them. But although the advantages gained by Mountjoy were great, Ireland was still a just cause of anxiety and embarrassment to Elizabeth, and in order to enable her to sustain the great expenses of the war, she suffered herself to be persuaded to the very impolitic measure of issuing base money for the payment of the troops. Mountjoy in the meantime was prosecuting with vigour and progressive success, the war with the insurgents. With the aid of Sir George Carew, president of Munster, and other able commanders, the inferior rebels were gradually reduced, and even the supplies of Tirowen himself were cut off. Still the courage of the rebels was in a great degree supported by the hope of Spanish aid, nor were those hopes vain and delusive, for Spain ~~was~~ busily employed by her agents in endeavouring to make her intentions known, and to keep up the spirit of religious antipathy among the ignorant Irish. At all times the arts and effects of superstition are lamentable, and none can reflect without abhorrence on the principles inculcated, and the practices countenanced by the Romish agents sent into Ireland to foment the disorders of those times.

While we regard with repugnance the schemes of the artful, we must compassionate a wretched people, who, without ever hearing the salutary or warning voice of instruction, were abandoned to the influence of factious and sanguinary zealots.

Nor must we do the English government and its despotic head the injustice to suppose, that in regard to religious matters the policy was severe, rash, or arbitrary; on the contrary, even the law which enforced an attendance on the reformed worship, was generally relaxed, indeed it could hardly be justly enforced under the circumstances of the times, as the Christian methods of reformation were sacrificed to the desire of discouraging the Irish language, in which only the mass of the people could receive instruction. There were also few churches to resort to, few teachers to exhort or instruct, and fewer still who could be understood. Hence, when the malcontents on submitting to government had been taught to demand a free exercise of religion, the ministers of Elizabeth were instructed to assure them of every indulgence, but that of an express and formal toleration. But at the same time, it was the regular and ordinary instruction to the provincial governors of Ireland, to persuade the people by all good means and ways to them seeming good, and especially by their own examples, to observe all orders for divine service, and to embrace and devoutly to observe the order and service of the church established in the realm by parliament, or otherwise.

Whenever the queen's ministers by virtue of these and similar commissions ventured on any vigorous exertion of their authority we find them controuled, and a more moderate conduct recommended from England, in which moderation Mountjoy seems to have heartily concurred, as he thought that any other course would defeat the object desired to be attained. "Not that I think," he observes, "too great preciseness can be used in reforming ourselves, the abuses of our own clergy, church livings, or discipline, nor that the

truth of the gospel can with too great vehemency or industry be set forward, in all places, and by all ordinary means most proper unto itself, that was first set forth and spread in meekness, nor that I think any corporal prosecution or punishment can be too severe for such as shall be found seditious instruments of foreign or inward practices, nor that I think it fit that any principal magistrates should be chosen without taking the oath of obedience, nor tolerated in absenting themselves from public divine worship, but that we may be advised how we do punish in their bodies or goods any such only for religion, as do profess to be faithful subjects to her majesty; and against whom the contrary cannot be proved." Whilst the royal commanders were daily gaining considerable advantages, and the rebels were in proportion becoming weaker, confident assurances were spread throughout the country, that the Spanish succours were speedily to embark, and that Münster was fixed upon as the first scene of their invasion. Oviedo, the Spanish archbishop of Dublin, and other factious ecclesiastics industriously disseminated the intelligence, and were indefatigable in the exertion of every means to animate the leaders of rebellion, and to confirm their resolution. They presented to Prince O'Nial commander of the Catholic army a flattering letter from the pope, filled with benedictions on himself and his adherents, who it was expressed, had not "bowed the knee to Baal," but resolutely contended for the faith.

Tirowen, cheered and elated by the prospect of the Spanish succours called his councils, dispatched his emissaries, encouraged his adherents, and exhorted them to prepare for the eventful crisis, to exert themselves against "*the pagan beast*," and to rekindle the flame of rebellion.

One of the principal rebel leaders was James Fitz Thomas, titular earl of Desmond, he was delivered by treachery into the power of Sir George Carew, and with Florence Macarthy sent prisoner to England. Sir George also possessed himself of some leaders of the same sept. One of them was abruptly asked by Sir George on his professing his fidelity to government, "But what if the Spaniards should arrive?" "In that case," he replied, "let not your lordship confide in me, nor in any of those lords who seem most devoted to your service." This is an instance of noble candour.

At length the Spaniards under Don Juan d'Aquilla arrived at Kinsale. He assumed the title of general in the holy war, for the preservation of the faith in Ireland, and endeavoured to persuade the people that Elizabeth was by several bulls of the pope deprived of her crown, that her subjects were absolved from their oaths of allegiance and that the Spaniards were come to deliver the Irish from the dominion of Satan. Mountjoy found it necessary to act with determined vigour, in order to prevent a total insurrection of the Irish thus instigated to revolt. We shall not follow the detail of this war, but merely add that after being threatened with a dreadful storm of revolt, the English saw it, by the pusillanimous conduct of the Irish, dissipated at once. One of the chiefs, O'Donnel, fled to Spain, and Tirowen, unable to persuade his associates to keep the field, stung with disappointment and disgrace retired in disgust to his own territory. D'Aquilla reduced to the greatest difficulties capitulated to the terms prescribed by Mountjoy, and consequently the rebels were reduced to dismay at the reverse of fortune so sudden and unexpected. The rumours however of a second Spanish in-

vation, kept alive the spirit of disaffection in Munster, although the calamities the insurgents endured might, it would naturally be thought, have subdued every feeling but that of personal and physical suffering. At a period when the horrors of famine and devastation were become absolutely insupportable to human nature, Owen Mac Eaggan, the pope's vicar apostolical for the southern provinces, and other factious zealots thundered out their anathemas against all those who should show mercy to the wretches taken fighting on the side of the English government. Those who thus fell into the hands of the insurgents, were butchered as enemies to the faith, those taken by the royalists were hanged as rebels. In one of the bloody rencounters, the furious Mac Eaggan was slain, animating his men with a sword in one hand, and his breviary in the other. Such was the bitter and rancorous spirit, which bore the name of a righteous zeal! In the meantime Mountjoy divided his army into small portions, harassing the rebels on every side, and many of the chieftains, after concealing themselves sometime in woods and morasses, submitted to mercy, receiving gladly such conditions as Mountjoy thought fit to impose. The miseries which the wretched Irish endured from the vicinity of the royal forces, preventing them from seeking any means of subsistence, were afflicting to the humanity even of those whom national duty obliged to punish them. Thousands perished by famine, and every place was encumbered by unburied victims of distress. The hideous resources sought for allaying the ragings of hunger, were more terrible even than the desolation. Tirowen was every day deserted by his followers, and in the extremity of distress made overtures with more sincerity than heretofore, to be received

upon terms. Circumstances determined Mountjoy to listen to these overtures with favour, but he refused to admit the rebel unless he made an absolute surrender of his life and fortune to the queen's mercy. Tirowen instantly complied, and appeared before the lord deputy at Millefont, by whom he was received with a dignity becoming the representative of an offended sovereign. He fell upon his knees and petitioned for mercy with an air and aspect of distress. His submission was entire. He utterly renounced the proud name of O'Nial, so far more precious to him than the earldom of Tirowen, abjured all foreign power, and in return for these and many other concessions he was promised a full pardon for himself and followers.

This affair being concluded, he accompanied Mountjoy to Dublin, where the death of Elizabeth was announced. The late rebel chieftain on hearing this intelligence burst into tears, by which he affected to manifest his grief for the loss of a princess who had shown him so much lenity. But those who knew his character more justly, it is probable; attributed the burst of passion to chagrin, at having by his premature submission deprived himself of some advantages which the death of Elizabeth might open to him. But it was too late to retreat, he therefore renewed his submission in due form to the new king, and addressed a letter to the king of Spain, notifying the return to his duty and allegiance, and requesting that his son who had been entertained at the Spanish court, might be permitted to return to Ireland. Many of the insurgents were driven by dire necessity to the continent, entering the armies of Spain. None remained in Ireland who had not sued for, or obtained the royal mercy. Tirowen's final submission taking place only four

days previous to the death of Elizabeth, she of course was not acquainted with it. That she was urged by her ministry to concede to him her pardon, appears very evident, but that her having done so, formed one of the causes of that melancholy which clouded the setting of her brilliant sun, can hardly be apprehended, although we admit the tenacity of her pride as a sovereign, and her inflexibility of temper, which might induce an apprehension that her concession would be attributed by the world to fear or to weakness, but we perfectly agree with her able biographer, that this attributed cause seems by no means commensurate to the lamentable effect.

Ireland was now restored to what may be deemed a general tranquillity, but it was the tranquillity of desolation. The contest had been long, difficult and dangerous, and the ghastly demon of famine, had accompanied the clangor of arms.* The period however was approaching when some degree of civility and union should take place of discord and barbarity.

In describing the furious zeal of the Irish in the cause of their ancient faith, we should greatly err did we suppose it to have arisen from any deep sense of the importance of the cause, or of their sincere attachment to it as a *principle*. Far from it,

* Some idea may be formed of the dreadful distress of the country at large, by the following rates of provisions sold in Dublin alone in 1602. By which it appears,

Wheat had risen from 36s. to nine pounds the quarter.

Barley malt from 10s. to 43s. the barrel.

Oat malt from 5s. to 22s. the barrel.

Pease from 5s. to 40s. the peck.

Oats from 3s. 4d. to 20s. the barrel.

Beef from 26s. 8d. to eight pounds the carcass.

Mutton from 3s. to 26s. do.

A lamb from 12d. to 6s.

A pork from 8s. to 30s.

See Ireland's History of Ireland, Vol. 2. page 410.

their minds were too closely enveloped in ignorance to feel any sincere reverence for any mode of faith and worship, and little did they examine or know how to appreciate that for which they unsheathed the sword. The spirit of party was the exciting impulse, that spirit which it has been justly observed seizes upon the mind like a kind of dictatorship, which puts to silence every other authority of the understanding and extinguishes the power of every sentiment of the heart. It forms the connecting link, uniting men together by the attraction of a common animosity, and so completely enchaining within its cold and frigid boundary every moral feeling that even in doing wrong, those whom it encircles conceive they are devoting themselves meritoriously. Thus it at once contracts the understanding, and depraves the heart, reducing as it were all minds to the same level, by subjecting them alike to the debasing slavery of mere opinion, to establish which every thing must be sacrificed as to an earthly divinity. The emissaries of Rome knew well the art of erecting this insatiate deity within the bosoms of the ignorant, and under the fairest and most plausible arguments concealed the subtle poison of religious rancour. Even when the avowed champion of the Irish church was taught to grace and add vigour to his insurrection by his pretended zeal, his indifference to it was so well understood, and his hypocrisy considered so contemptible that the open hearted Essex exclaimed to him "Hang thee, thou talk of the free exercise of religion! thou carest as much for religion as my horse!" The Earl of Desmond also confessed his own ignorance of religious information, and was willing to comply with *any* the English government might prescribe. In fact the Romish emissaries saw their power was tottering, they

saw numbers of their ecclesiastics inculcating the doctrines of civil obedience and submission to a government to which they had sworn allegiance, and the busy agents of the papal court were violent in their condemnation, and industrious in counteracting doctrines so inimical to their power, and the dominion the papacy had hitherto maintained in Ireland. The people were artfully taught that while they had no power of resistance, the pope had graciously allowed them to submit to an excommunicated sovereign, and an heretical government, so far as the exercise of that government did not affect their religion. But when the faith required their assistance to support it, it was impious and damnable not to cast off this submission; and not to espouse a cause so glorious, was to renounce at once their eternal salvation. Bulls were spread through Ireland adapted to all humours, to countenance these principles, and thus almost insensibly a virulent popish party was formed in Ireland, and cherished with paternal care by the holy father, by means of his never wearied agents. But while this party was thus secretly animated, the rigour of Elizabeth's government during the period of her power, and the success of her arms as well as the universal commotion of war had kept it under some restraint. On the accession of James the first the latent spirit began openly to manifest itself. As this monarch however appears in a very advantageous light as a legislator of Ireland, we shall now conclude this chapter of our retrospect, and open another with the transactions of his reign as referring to his Hibernian dominions.

CHAPTER XIV.

Romanists' pretexts for intrigue—Contempt of the penal statutes—Boldness of the Catholics, their violent proceedings—Seditious spirit requires check—Interview of ecclesiastics with Mountjoy—His proceedings against the turbulent—Act of oblivion published—Mountjoy returns to England, is accompanied by his prisoner Tirowen—Irish present a petition to the king—King becomes more reserved towards them—Extract of letter from Sir John Harrington—Intentions of James respecting Ireland—Sir George Carew, governor—Sagacity of the people—Sir Arthur Chichester, governor; advances civil reformation, but good effects counteracted by religious animosities—Reasons of encouragement for the Catholics—Objections of James to the politics of the Catholics—Conduct of James—His measures not acted upon with a right spirit by his agents—Consequences—Daring spirit of the recusants—Severity towards them—Remonstrances—Coincidence of circumstances creates suspicion, seizure of Lalor—His conduct—His trial—Chichester—His proceedings—Book of Common Prayer translated into Irish—Seditious spirit prevailing keeps the government on the alert—Suspicious circumstance—Restlessness of the Northern chiefs—Tirowen and Tirconnel flee to the continent—Complaints of Romish agents—James's proclamation—Reception of Irish chiefs on the continent—Colony of Ulster—Chichester well calculated to bring into effect the designs of his sovereign—Rebel chieftains conciliated—Lands reclaimed by the clergy—Ecclesiastical institutions—Noble plans of James—Towns incorporated.

THE Romanists of Ireland ever ready to avail themselves of any change as a pretext for their intrigues, on the accession of James, [1602] encouraged their votaries, by assuring them that the new king was of the Romish faith. But when they found this assertion discredited by circumstances, they industriously preached the infant's right of succession, and taught the ignorant that he could not

be a lawful king, who had not been established by the pope, and had not sworn to defend the Catholic religion.

These insinuations had so powerful an effect upon the restless dispositions of those to whom they were addressed, that almost all Munster, and also several cities of Leinster, conspired to avow their contempt of the penal statutes respecting the public worship, and resolved to revive that of the Romish ritual, in full splendour. No longer, as heretofore, confining the ceremonies of their religion to privacy; the Catholics not only erected their crosses, celebrated with pomp their masses and processions, with every circumstance of sacerdotal splendour; but even ejected the reformed ministers from their churches, seized those religious houses which had been converted to civil uses, and showed, even to the most trifling details, a firm and determined spirit of opposition to the reformed mode of faith.

These factious ecclesiastics were particularly numerous and turbulent in the city of Cork, where one of them pretended to have received a legantine authority from Rome, and the most ready obedience was paid to his commission. To such a height of insolence was it carried, that the magistrates refused to proclaim the king, demanding time to *consider of it*, and when they yielded to the remonstrances and vigorous measures of the lord deputy it was with little respect. As to the point of religion on which they had been peculiarly insolent, they replied to him, "that they only exercised now publicly, that which ever before they had been suffered to exercise privately, and as their public prayers gave testimony of their faithful hearts to the king, so they were tied to be no less careful to manifest their duties to God, in which they never would be dis-

sembling temporisers.” Had this firmness been free from the seditious spirit which corrupted it, it would have been laudable, but as it was far from being a pure principle, it was harassing and distressing to the nation, still suffering from the long protraction of wars, and the devastations it had produced, and called for the firm conduct of Mountjoy to arrest its consequences. He accordingly marched into Munster with his army, the gates of Waterford were closed against him, the citizens pleading, that by a charter of King John they were exempted from quartering soldiers. The promoters of this resistance were soon manifested; two ecclesiastics, in the habits of their order, with erected cross, presented themselves before Mountjoy, and peremptorily declared, that the citizens of Waterford could not in conscience obey any prince who persecuted the Catholic faith. We have the following account of this singular interview, given by Moryson: “ Dr. White, accompanied by a young Dominican friar, came into the camp, but when they foolishly carried a crucifix, openly showing the same, the soldiers were hardly kept from offering them violence, and when they put up the crucifix in their pockets, yet could hardly endure the sight of their habits, which each wore according to his order, Dr. White wearing a black gown and cornered cap, and the friar wearing a white woollen frock. White being come into his lordship’s tent, was bold to maintain erroneous and dangerous opinions, for maintenance of that which the citizens had done, in the reforming of religion without authority, all which his lordship did (as no layman, I think, could better do) most learnedly confute. And when White cited a place of St. Austin for his proof, his lordship, having the book in his tent, showed all the company that he had

falsely cited the father, for howsoever his words were found there, yet were they set down by way of an assertion, which St. Austin confuted in the discourse following. At this surprisal White was somewhat out of countenance, and the citizens ashamed." Though Mountjoy thus condescended to listen to the arguments of his clerical visitors, and had it in his power to detect their false adaptation of the venerable father Augustine to the circumstances of the time, yet he treated them with the dignity of an offended representative of their sovereign. He threatened to draw King James's sword, and cut the charter of King John to pieces, and to level their city. His determined menaces were effectual, and he was admitted, received the allegiance of the people, who renounced all foreign jurisdiction, and were obliged to admit a strong garrison to keep them firm to their engagements.

Several other cities, which had in a similar manner declared for the free and public exercise of popery, were reduced by Mountjoy to similar compliances. But though the arm of power, and the dread of punishment, thus restrained the turbulence of faction, the spirit yet remained in full force, ready to burst forth on the slightest favourable occasion. In order if possible to gain the affections, as well as to controul the passions of the multitude, an act of state was published by proclamation, called an "Act of Oblivion and Indemnity;" by this salutary act the whole body of the people were received into the immediate royal protection, all past offences were pardoned and utterly extinguished, never to be revived and called in question. This important ordinance was the last act of Mountjoy's most honourable administration. He was constituted lord lieutenant, but permitted to appoint Sir George Carew

his deputy. He returned to England with his prisoners, who were received favourably by the king. Tirowen was confirmed in his honours, and possessions, but such was the popular aversion expressed for the individual by whose rebellion so many had been deprived of their friends and relatives, that he was obliged to be attended by a powerful escort to guard him against the revengeful fury of the people.

From the favourable reception of this chieftain at the court of James, his countrymen and associates conceived that the king entertained a high idea of the Irish, and dreading their power would yield to their expressed wishes. By their friends, therefore, resident at the English court, they presented a petition to the throne for the free and public toleration of the Romish worship. Whatever were the private sentiments of James on the subject, the petition was disregarded, and it determined him to treat the Irish visitants with more reserve, and to be more guarded in his professions of grace and favour.

That James was too lavish in his favour to the arch rebel Tirowen is evident, from the lively remarks of Sir John Harrington, in a letter to the Bishop of Bath and Wells. "I have lived," he remarks, "to see that d——d rebel, Tyrone, brought to England, courteously favoured, honoured, and well liked. O, my lord, what is there that does not prove the inconstancy of worldly matters! How did I labour after that knave's destruction! I was called from my home by her majesty's command, adventured perils by sea and by land, endured toil, was near starving, eat horse-flesh at Munster, and all to quell that man who now smileth in peace at those who did hazard their lives to destroy him. Essex took me to Ireland; I had scant time to put on my boots,

I followed with good-will, and did return with the lord lieutenant to meet ill-will. I did bear the frowns of her that sent me, and were it not for her good liking, rather than my good deservings, I had been sore discountenanced indeed." (*See Aikin's James I.*)

But to return to the state of Ireland, from which the agreeable Sir John Harrington has for a moment beguiled us.

Before James could hope to civilise his barbarous Irish subjects, he well knew that he must abolish as far as possible those customs which supplied to them the place of law, and which would ever prevent their rising in the scale of nations. After abolishing these pernicious customs, and substituting English laws in their place, having taken the natives under his protection, declared them free citizens, and quieted all minds by an universal indemnity, a detail of which belongs not to our retrospect, James proceeded in the most cautious and judicious manner to govern his Irish subjects, by a just administration, military as well as civil, no authority but that of the king and the law being allowed throughout the kingdom. In his plans for the restoration of public peace, and the firm establishment of public justice, during the administration of Sir George Carew, itinerant judges visited the northern provinces; one of these judges, Sir John Davis, remarks, "which visitation, though it were somewhat distasteful to the Irish lords, was most welcome to the common people, who, although they were rude and barbarous, yet did they quickly apprehend the difference between tyranny and oppression, under which they had lived before, and the just government and protection which we promised unto them for the time to come." This is a proof of popular sagacity that illustrates in a striking

manner that the plans of reform before resorted to had been directed to the wrong quarter; it was evident that the chieftains' power needed restriction, in order effectually to ameliorate the condition and improve the morals of the people.

Sir Arthur Chichester succeeded Carew; 1604, and greatly advanced the work of reformation, for the interesting detail of which, we refer our readers to other histories; for it is our less pleasing duty to record, that the progress of these laudable schemes of reformation, as well as the salutary effects they were calculated to produce, were unhappily interrupted and retarded by the virulence of religious faction, or rather a seditious party spirit, covering itself under the venerable shade of religion.

It was not indeed without some reason that the numerous body of Catholics in Ireland presumed on the favour of the new king, and his partiality for their communion. The indulgence shown by him to the Catholics in Scotland, his transactions with the pontiff, and the hopes entertained of his entire conversion to the Romish communion, while King of Scots, were all well known, through the emissaries of the papacy, to the Irish Catholics. The sentiments also expressed by James in his first parliament, when he shocked the puritans, by declaring that he was ready to meet the Catholics half-way, and in regard to the laity of that communion, said, he "would be sorry to punish their bodies for the errors of their minds;" these sentiments were but a repetition of opinions he had often even more openly avowed, which, added to his many expressions of tenderness to the *mother church*, were industriously treasured and propagated among a people ready to believe any thing that favoured their own ideas. Obviously tending to

strengthen their cause, as such a belief of the monarch's sentiments must have done, the popish ecclesiastics with little restraint and caution made use of it among their ignorant votaries, denouncing their spiritual vengeance on those who should presume to attend on the established worship, or dare to dissemble the religious principles in which they had been brought up, we can hardly say educated. The abbeys and monasteries were repaired, churches re-fitted and furnished for the Romish rites, which were again publicly celebrated in several parts of the realm. They even proceeded yet greater lengths, too evidently betraying the secular spirit which governed them, they presumed to arraign the civil administration, to review causes which had been determined in the king's courts, and to enjoin the people, as they tendered their salvation, to obey their decisions, and not those of the law. Whatever sentiments of indulgence James expressed for the religious tenets of Rome, he had certainly an utter abhorrence to their secular politics, which taught the supremacy of the pope. "But for the clerics," he says, alluding to the Catholics in his speech to the first parliament, "I must directly say and affirm, that as long as they maintain *one* special point of their doctrine, and another of their practice, they are no way sufferable to remain in this kingdom. The point of doctrine is that arrogant and ambitious supremacy of their head, the pope, whereby he not only claims to be spiritual head of all Christians, but also to have an imperial civil power over all kings and emperors, dethroning and decrowning with his foot as pleaseth him, and dispensing and disposing of all kingdoms and empires at his appetite."

Besides this avowed objection to the power of the Catholics, probably only assumed for the

occasion, as the plea was not grounded on any change in the system, since he had expressed favour towards the papists, James was now circumstanced in a manner which obliged him to be wary. When he had added to his privy council, on his accession, the lords Thomas and Henry Howard, the whole body of English Catholics regarded it as a happy augury for their cause, and doubtless those of Ireland participated in the feeling. Supported by such warm advocates in the council, they very naturally flattered themselves they should speedily experience the indulgence of the King of England, by the fulfilment of his assurances in their favour while King of Scots. But the times were altered with James. The Catholics were feared, despised, and hated by those whom the monarch feared to offend. The Catholics were a declining power; the puritans were a rising and increasing one. James had a difficult middle course to steer between them, and it is probable that his jealousy of the Catholic article of doctrine, interfering with his desire of possessing supreme jurisdiction both in church and state, determined his conduct. He lost no time in disavowing, by proclamation, the promises of some innovation in religion, which he was reported to have made, at the same time plainly manifesting his intentions towards the disappointed Catholics, by commanding all manner of priests, seminarists, and Jesuits, (whose numbers and boldness had greatly increased in the presumption of his indulgence,) immediately to depart the kingdom.

It may be proper to take a cursory view of the political state of England, in regard to the parties which agitated it at this time, as it was peculiar and critical. The parties which divided it being of different religious sects, of course the judicious

management of them was difficult and complex, in order to preserve a just equipoise ; for it is an observation, the truth of which is warranted by all history, that when the religious spirit mingles itself with faction, it produces effects in its operations on society less corresponding with their known causes than is found in any other circumstance of human life or government. The church itself was at this time divided into two parties, to which the Catholics were equally opposed : these were distinguished by the several appellations of Prelatists and Puritans. The prelatists or the orthodox professed a perfect satisfaction with the church establishment as it stood, desiring only to preserve it inviolate from innovation on either side ; they considered themselves as the natural allies of the king and the state. James found it both politic and necessary to conciliate this party, he therefore formally renounced the presbyterian principles of his education, the austere exterior of which he had indeed endeavoured to enliven by assimilating with it some of the simple ceremonies retained in the reformed Church of England ; but the line to be pursued towards the other parties, that is, those of the Catholics and the Puritans was more difficult. Scarcely knowing how to manage them, James had alternately flattered and promised each, more particularly the Catholics ; both were numerous, both powerful, both impatient of the yoke, and neither in any way disposed to forego present indulgence for the hope of future pre-eminence.

To the reader of the transactions of this period it cannot be a subject of doubt, that the Catholics considered themselves the rightful possessors of all the privileges wrested from them by the reformation, and still continued to regard themselves oppressed, insulted, and injured if not suf-

ferred to bear rule and maintain their superiority in the state. Yet this party had now been on the decline for more than half a century, and though it made frequent struggles of artificial strength, yet it would appear that by a firm and steady policy it might have been rendered at least innoxious. But if the Catholic party may be regarded at this time as declining, that of the Puritans was unquestionably rising into power and vigour. It numbered among its adherents some individuals, bold assertors of civil liberty, who by a discussion of some glaring grievances were naturally led on to the investigation of others. "Of these assertors of English liberty," observes the intelligent Aikin, "a small proportion appear to have been indifferent to the presbyterian cause, but there was a strong natural connection between Calvinistic principles in religion and popular principles in government, and they were so usually found united, that the sect and the party came to be considered as identified. This sect was important and formidable, possessing such a stern and inflexible spirit that the whole force of government was insufficient to support its aspirings. Indeed the puritans were enabled to forward their own views from being included in the church, pretending not to any separate worship or discipline, but ready to avail themselves of any weakness they perceived in the edifice which sheltered them. Any attempt at secession would have been considered as unpardonable, even by the puritans themselves, as tending to the subversion of civil society. "Even so great a reasoner as Lord Bacon," observes Hume, "thought that uniformity in religion was absolutely necessary to the support of government, and that no toleration could with safety be given to sectaries." Nothing but the imputation of idolatry, which was thrown

on the Catholics, could justify, even in the eyes of the Protestants themselves, the schism made by the Hugonots and other Protestants, who lived in popish countries.

If the Catholics thought themselves justified in anticipating the favour of James, the Puritans were no less sanguine of his support when he acceded to the throne of England. Under his sway, educated as he had been in the principles they professed, they entertained the warmest hopes of seeing more serene and prosperous days and of being allowed openly to evince their attachment to the discipline and worship of the Church of Geneva. These hopes were naturally grounded upon the early prepossessions of the king, and his frequent strong declarations of his attachment to their ecclesiastical constitution, particularly in a general assembly held at Edinburgh in 1530, when he observed, "I praise God that I was born in a time of the light of the gospel, and in such a place as to be king of the sincerest (viz. the purest) kirk in the world. As for our neighbour kirk of England, their service is an evil masse in English, they want nothing of the mass but the liftings (viz. the elevation of the host). I charge you my good doctors, ministers, elders, nobles, gentlemen, and barons to stand to your purity, and to exhort your people to do the same, and I, forsooth, as long as I brook my life, shall do the same."

The first measures of James seemed to confirm these assertions, as he appeared desirous of assuming the character of a mediator or arbitrator to conciliate matters between the church and the puritans. That these hopes were unfulfilled must be attributed to the desire of unlimited sway, which was the absorbing passion of James, so that all his measures, whether civil or religious, were rendered subservient to his one great selfish

object, which while it clouded and narrowed his mind by prejudices frequently rendered his conduct liable to the imputation of duplicity, weakness, and design.

As James, under the influence of the impressions made by the opposing parties in the state, had judged it proper to command all priests and Jesuits to depart from England, so by a like proclamation were the Catholic clergy of Ireland commanded to depart within a limited time, unless they consented fully to conform to the laws of the land. James, though positive, was lenient in all his measures, and this order was intended to be acted upon with that spirit equally in both kingdoms; but in Ireland, it enraged the whole body of Romanists so much, that it produced severities never intended. It was represented by those who had dominion over the popular feeling, that it was an instance of implacable persecution. Such was the daring spirit of the recusants excited by these insinuations, that the chief governor and council deemed it their imperative duty to guard against their outrages by reviving those statutes which were so openly insulted, by formally enjoining the magistrates and chief citizens of Dublin to attend the public worship in the established churches. The order, however, did but render the recusants more obstinate, and in fact, though prompted by a sense of official duty, it was injudicious.

Opposition, force, and severity must ever increase rather than still the fermentation of party spirit, for even a triumph gained by a compromise is esteemed a defeat by a spirit of party, nor will it admit the smallest appearance of modification. Thus it proved in the instance we are relating. Admonitions and remonstrances proving vain, the recusants were fined and committed to prison.

This severity roused many to espouse their cause, who otherwise were disposed to remain passive. All the old families of the pale took alarm, remonstrated against the proceedings of the government: and denying even the legality of its sentences; they urged, that by the act of the 2d of Elizabeth, the crime of recusancy had its punishment ascertained, and that any extension of the penalty was illegal and unconstitutional. Their remonstrance and petition for the free exercise of religion was presented to the council by a large concourse on the very day when intelligence was received of the gunpowder conspiracy, a circumstance which awakened the jealous fears of the king's ministers, making them suspect some concert and collusion between the conspirators of England and the Romish party in Ireland. Indeed, among all the various sources of inventive intrigue and deep policy employed by the Romanists to bring back England and Ireland to the papal yoke, and to ascertain the strength of their party, we must rank this conspiracy, whether it is regarded as the act of a few fanatical individuals or as emanating from more important and higher sources. The chief petitioners to the Irish council were committed to the castle at Dublin, and Sir Patrick Barnwall, their great agent, was by command of James sent in custody to England.

The general clamour and discontent of the party were increased at this time by an incident, which, under less irritable influence, would have caused no sensation. This was the seizure of a popish ecclesiastic, named Lalor. He had exercised the office of vicar-general throughout several dioceses of Leinster by virtue of a commission from Rome. Fear of punishment however so powerfully influenced the mind of this man, that he made a formal declaration, confirmed by oath,

of the unlawfulness of his office, renouncing foreign jurisdiction and acknowledging the king's supremacy. His party, informed of these concessions, bitterly reproached him, and with a true Jesuitical spirit he privately denied having made them. This in its turn was detected by the vigilance of government, and he defended it with the meanest equivocation; perhaps perfectly reconciled to himself under the convenient plea of justifiable *mental reservation*. He was brought to trial under an act of the 16th of Richard the Second, to convince the Irish that the recent declarations of the royal supremacy were but an assertion of the ancient constitutional rights of the crown. Lalor, though clearly condemned was not subjected to any punishment; severe measures not being deemed political by the counsellors of James at that particular period.

The Lord Deputy was recommended, if possible, to reclaim the recusants by the gentle and gradual methods of instruction and exhortation. Sir Arthur Chichester was very ready to act upon this judicious advice. He proceeded, in the first place, to take measures to reform the established clergy, to enforce a particular attention to their duty, and more especially to aid his intentions to procure a translation of the Common Prayer into the Irish language, for the instruction of the ignorant and the edification of all. It is pleasing to have it in our power to mark this important and salutary exercise of authority, for it is surely not sufficient that sovereigns should merely be persuaded of the salutary influence of religion on the morality and happiness of those subjected to their empire, but they are bound to use the means to maintain and to cherish this salutary action, and of course every part of public worship becomes of infinite importance and should be made plain and compre-

hensive to the people. Nor can any thing be imagined more calculated to produce every good effect, both political, moral, and religious on the minds of the multitude than the Liturgy of our church, at once interesting and affecting—sympathizing with human weakness—suited to human wants and anxieties, and of power to elevate the soul towards the Supreme Being and the study of his attributes, and in fact producing in the soul of man those sentiments which form the firmest and securest band to unite men together in loyalty to their king, obedience to their governors, and social love towards each other.

The confidence with which the recusants of the pale had demanded the toleration of their religion, the strength of their party, and the conviction of the incessant assiduity and influence of the popish emissaries, with a recollection of the political disorders they had heretofore fomented, tended not without just reason to keep the Irish government upon the alert, and suspicion and alarm ever awake, and of course gave weight and importance to rumours of insurrections, which under more quiet circumstances might have been deemed frivolous and unalarming. Thus, when a letter was found about this time in the privy council chamber, intimating that a dangerous scheme of rebellion was forming by the Earls of Tirowen and Tirconnel and others, the government was justly alarmed by its contents, more especially as it stated further, that the conspirators had solicited assistance from Spain and Brussels, intending to commence hostilities by surprising Dublin Castle, and assassinating the lord deputy and council. Nothing can more forcibly illustrate the restless ambition of these northern chiefs and the direful influence of those arts which had induced them to regard treason, rebellion, and assassination

as meritorious, than that they should even at the moment when they were still suffering the effects of their recent rebellion, in the devastation surrounding them, involve themselves in a fresh one; but that they were ready to relight the torch of war in their native land, would appear from the conduct of Tirowen and Tirconnel, who, on the first alarm of government, fled to the continent, thus abandoning, by an act which evidenced their guilt, their vast possessions to the disposal of the crown. It is true that the Romish party asserted that the violences exercised against these chieftains and their followers compelled them thus to abandon their possessions and their country, and that they had been beguiled to commit themselves incautiously in some private conferences with a person who had betrayed them to the lord deputy. Had this however been the fact, they had the power of justification and explanation, but as no such justification ever appeared, we must be compelled to doubt their integrity, though probably by the very act of their flight they did, as they wished, recommend themselves to their party as men who had sacrificed every temporal possession in the cause of their faith and their country.

Nothing could be more favourable to the designs of James in reforming and settling Ireland than the flight of these chieftains under such circumstances. The greatest and most valuable part of Ulster was thus left to his uncontrolled disposal, opening indeed a fair field for the exercise of that laudable policy he meditated to pursue. He lost no time in availing himself of the favourable circumstances; judges were immediately sent to the territories of the self-exiled chieftains, who were, with some fugitives of inferior note, attainted by process of outlawry; and other of the conspi-

rators, who had been seized, were tried, condemned, and executed.

The Romish agents were loud in their complaints, that these lords had been treated with such severity on account of their conscientious adherence to their faith. James repelled this charge by a proclamation, by which he declared that he was by no means to be regarded as the persecutor of that faith, which his laws had rendered it penal to profess, that it was not his remotest intention to proceed against the exiled chieftains and their followers on account of their religion, intimating that they were too barbarous and ignorant duly to know or appreciate any form of religion, therefore it would be both absurd and unjust to prosecute them on a point they could not understand. It was for their restless sedition that they were become obnoxious to the laws, fomenting as they did intestine rebellion, and by their agents, "priests and Jesuits," applying for foreign assistance, concealing under the false plea of divesting themselves of the English yoke, their deep designs of extirpating all the king's subjects in Ireland of the old English race. We have every reason to believe the sincerity of James in this self-vindication, as he was always ready to dispense with the severity of laws when he found it safely practicable.

Mean time the Irish chieftains, in spite of the remonstrances of the English ambassador in Flanders, were honourably received by the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella, a new company being immediately formed in the archduke's army to give "present entertainment" to their followers; finally they repaired to Milan, where they resided, favoured and pensioned by Philip the Third, notwithstanding his absolute promise not to suffer them to remain in any part of his

dominions, and in defiance of the articles of a treaty which restricted each power from favouring the traitors of the other. But whatever plans James and his ministers had projected for the improvement of the country were for a time suspended, although the principal chiefs of rebellion were removed and others had paid the forfeit of their temerity. The elements of disaffection yet remained in many a bosom, ready to start into action upon the smallest provocation.

In a country where distress and oppression had made so many victims, there were naturally many brooding spirits, and many causes of aggression to justify violence or secret treachery, and in the guerilla wars of the irritated natives the English government found ample employ, while the continued efforts of the oppressed to harass and distress the administration they could have no rational expectation of subduing, served only more closely to rivet the chains which galled them.

Unfortunately for Ireland the government in applying apparent remedies to the evils which annoyed it and filled the country with misery and violence, forgot or seemed unmindful of the deep moral causes which produced them, and to which they should have reverted in order to effectuate any radical change. James seems to have been fully aware of the real causes which had hitherto operated against any improvement or settlement of his Irish dominions, and to have been ardent in the noble care of introducing humanity and justice among a people, possessing many noble qualities, but degraded, nay even depraved, by those principles which are intended and are capable of cherishing and exalting every social virtue; viz. religion and government. By the conspiracies and rebellions which had occurred, a vast tract of land had escheated to the crown. This was covered with

woods, where robbers and rebels found secure shelter. These lands James resolved to dispose of, in such a manner as might introduce the happy consequences of peace and cultivation. A company was accordingly established in London for planting new colonies in a country which only needed the culture of man to repay his toils. The property was divided into moderate shares, and tenants from England and Scotland were placed upon them. The Irish were removed from their hills and mountain retreats and placed in the open country. Husbandry and the arts were taught them, fixed habitations allotted them, plunder and robbery punished, and in process of time Ulster, from being the most wild, disorderly, and disaffected province of Ireland, became the most civilised and best cultivated, and the country must gratefully acknowledge that James here laid the foundation-stone of its structure of civility. In this great and praise-worthy work James was greatly assisted by Sir Arthur Chichester, appointed lord deputy., Endowed with those essential qualities in the character of a statesman, capacity, judgment, firmness, and experience, he was admirably qualified to direct the execution of the king's designs.

Amongst the old Irish chieftains who were included in the plans, were those who had engaged in the rebellion of Tirowen, and yet harboured in secret their discontents. To gain them over, if possible, by favour and lenity, particular indulgences were granted them. Their under-tenants and servants were allowed to be of their own religion and country, and they were tacitly exempted from taking the oath of allegiance. Scarcely, however, had the lands been severally allotted to the various patentees, when considerable portions were reclaimed by the clergy as their rightful

property, by the title of Termon, Corbe, and Herenach lands. In the northern parts of Ireland which had never been completely reduced, the ancient ecclesiastical institutions remained unaltered, the pope still disposing of clerical dignities. The terms by which they were now claimed were strange and inexplicable to the English government. Jurors in the several inquisitions were therefore required to obtain information on the subject, and many investigations ensued. The learned Usher exercised his abilities and industry in the research, he investigated their nature and origin, and the result was his conviction, that the ecclesiastical institutions of Ireland were similar to those of other countries of Europe, viz. That in ancient times, whoever founded a church, should endow it with certain lands for the maintenance of divine worship therein. The founder was to deliver to the bishop an instrument of such donation before the church could be dedicated, and from thenceforward the ordering and disposing of these lands was entirely vested in the bishop. In consequence of such donation, the lands became exempt from all charges of temporal lords, and were entitled to the right of sanctuary and other immunities. Hence they were called Tearmuin or Termon, or *privileged lands*. They were occupied by laymen who husbanded the same, both for the behalf of themselves and families, and likewise for the use and benefit of the church. They were called ecclesiastical tenants. To receive and apply the rents paid by such tenants it was deemed necessary that every church should have its archdeacon called by the Irish, *herenach*. We are to understand however, that these archdeacons were an inferior order to the presbyteri, not those who exercise jurisdiction immediately under the

bishop. A number of these *herenachs* were superintended by an officer of greater dignity, called Corbe, or Comburba, ranking as archipresbyter. This term, Comburba, frequently occurs in the Irish annals, and, in fact, signifies the prelate himself, or first successor of the Irish saint who presided in his diocese. Thus the Comburba of St. Patrick, means the then Archbishop of Armagh; the Comburba of Kienan, the Bishop of Clontmacnoise. The *herenachs*, under the direction of the *corbes*, resided on the Termon lands, and distributed their profits to the bishop, the inferior clergy, to the repairs of the church, the maintenance of hospitality in the proportions established in each diocese. They, like other ecclesiastics in early times, were under no injunctions of celibacy, their office and dignity, with the emoluments annexed to them, descended therefore, frequently, to their children, and the lands entrusted to them were held by their particular sept in succession. At the period, however, of which we treat, the estates of the northern bishoprics of Ireland, had become so embarrassed and unsettled, by the usurpations of the chieftains, the claims of patentees, and various other causes, that they scarcely afforded a competent, much less an honourable provision, for men of worth and learning, while the state of the parochial clergy was deplorable. During the recent wars, most of the northern churches had even been destroyed, others were fallen to ruin. The benefices were small, and such was the general abuse, that they were kept by the bishops in the way of canmondam, or sequestration, or what was even worse, filled with ministers unworthy their important office. Under these deplorable circumstances, the wretched flock were abandoned to their unchecked passions, and the

darkness of their ignorance, for many years divine service not having been performed in any parish church of Ulster, except in cities and large towns.

These abuses imperiously demanded attention and remedy ; the king therefore ordained, in order to make some provision for the instruction of a people immersed in such lamentable ignorance, that all ecclesiastical lands should be restored to their respective sees and churches, and that all lands should be deemed ecclesiastical from which the bishops had, in *former times*, received rents or pensions. He directed also that compositions should be made with the patentees, for the scite of cathedral churches, the residences of bishops and dignitaries, and other church lands ; they were to receive equivalents, if they compounded freely, but if not, they were to be deprived of their patent, on the ground that the king had been deceived in his grant, as he intended not to convey church lands to them, and considered the obligation of restoring them. In order to provide for the inferior clergy, the bishops were required to resign their impropriations, and relinquish the tithes paid them out of parishes, to the respective incumbents, for which they received ample recompense out of the king's lands. Every portion allotted to undertakers was constituted a parish, with a parochial church to each. The incumbents, besides their tithes and duties, had glebe lands assigned to them, in proportion to the extent of their parishes ; and to provide and ensure a succession of worthy pastors, free-schools were endowed in the principal towns. Considerable grants of lands were also conferred on the university of Dublin, together with the advowson of six parochial churches, three of the largest, and three of middle proportion in each county. Such

was the noble plan which justly entitles James to the praise of being the benefactor of Ireland, conferring upon him an honour far superior to the transient glory of successful ambition, or the acquisition of territory. Surely a monarch who thus estimates national prosperity by the diffusion of virtuous happiness, and in consistency with this maxim employs the prerogative of his high station in every lawful measure, to stimulate the idle to exertion, to encourage industry, to restrain licentiousness; to cherish and protect religion and true liberty, is worthy to be ranked among the first of human benefactors, has a just claim to the warmest gratitude of his people, and to the generous esteem of mankind; and to such an individual, whatever may be his station, whatever may be the general imperfection of his character, as in that of James, posterity, in referring to his Irish settlements, must regard with emotions of veneration his endeavours to promote the virtue, and ameliorate the state of an unhappy country. The auspicious effects of his generous policy soon appeared, although the imperfection which attaches to every human plan, was evident in the inadequate execution of the design, compared with the original idea. But with all the drawbacks which the apathy of some, the cupidity of others produced, a number of loyal subjects were introduced into a part of the country, which their industry converted from a desolated waste, the haunt of rapine and violence, into cultivated fields and cheerful towns, continually improving in civilization.

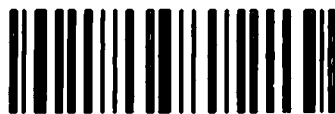
To encourage the industry of the settlers, as well as to advance his own projects, the king incorporated several of the towns, so as to give them a right of representation in the Irish parliament, thus gradually elevating them in the scale of being, by uniting them with the strong

bond of a community of interests, and making them participants of that government they had hitherto regarded with hatred and jealousy. The right thus vested in the towns of the infant settlement was soon brought by circumstances into action.

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